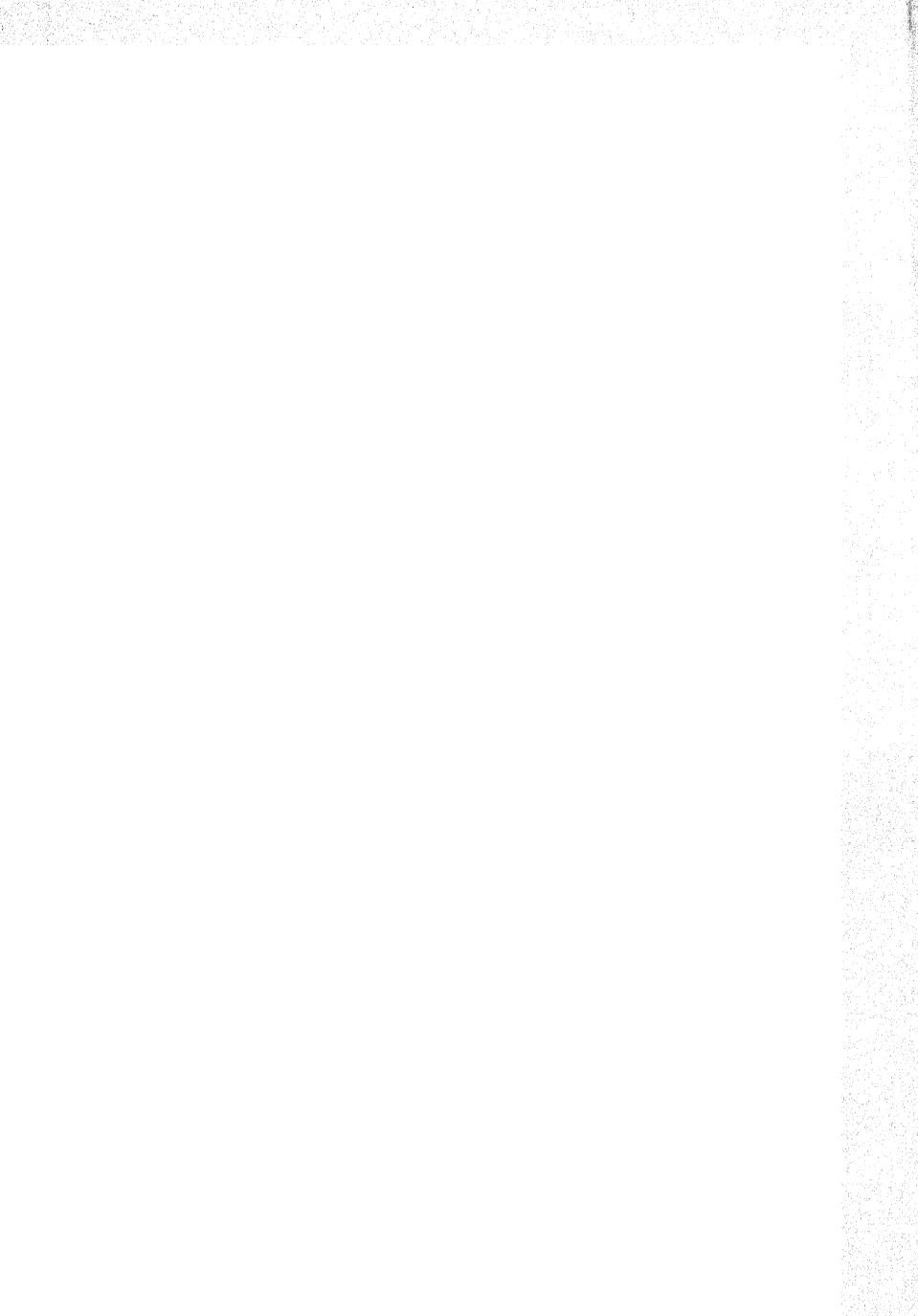


Governments of
DANUBIAN EUROPE



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DANUBIAN EUROPE

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To
J. R. G.



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Preface



This book encompasses a span of three years, stretching from the conclusion of military operations in Central Europe (May, 1945) to the spring of 1948. This period can be treated neither as a closed unit nor as a separate chapter with its own definitive terminal dates, for the preceding era of World War II caused a tremendous political and social upheaval in the Danube Valley. The prewar years, in turn, left their historic heritage for governments and peoples alike, and justify a brief survey of the crucial period of 1918 to 1941. Nor can the curtain descend over the entire region on June 1, 1948; the last chapter of the book is, therefore, devoted to an explanation of the problems of regional alliance systems and their future implications for the peace of continental Europe.

Set against this background of history, the geographic concept of *Danubian* Europe requires further clarification. The six national units of Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria are held together by a geographic link of the greatest importance, the Danube River. Although they have been variously labeled as countries of Central, Eastern, or Southeastern Europe, their physical location in the Danube Valley has been of transcending significance in the past, and will again determine their future destinies. Despite political animosities, racial antagonisms, and the overwhelming pressures by East and West, the six countries are inseparably linked by the ever-present ties of geography and economics. They are *Danubian* for several compelling reasons. The river has frequently served as a political boundary, as a man-designated obstacle to national expansion; simultaneously it has developed into a major commercial life line. It thus performed the seemingly contradictory roles of political separation and economic unification. The influence of the Danube on surrounding countries has been all-pervasive whether the crumbling empires of

Turks and Habsburgs held the region together with the nominal ties of uncertain political allegiance, or whether a mosaic of little nations, hastily appearing in the midst of chaos, availed themselves more of its divisive than of its unifying features. The climactic postwar history of Danubia offers excellent further testimony to the aspects of political division (the Czech-Hungarian controversy centered around recent readjustments of the prewar Danube boundary) and of commercial unification, as exemplified by the establishment of mixed Soviet-Hungarian and Soviet-Rumanian shipping companies, which have opened the road to Soviet economic control of the entire Danube Valley.

A sharp distinction should be drawn between the familiar geographic confines of the Danube Basin and the contemporary political states properly known as Danubian. The Danube drains all of Rumania and Hungary, almost all of Yugoslavia and Austria, and about half of Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. In terms of a political perspective Austria today is beyond the boundaries of Danubian Europe. She is not included in this study, for the political problems of her postwar development are distinct from, and contrary to, the prevailing pattern of Danubia. The present four-power occupation and the absence of a peace treaty largely exclude contemporary Austria from the constitutional and political life of this region. Although the intricate pattern of satellite governments also applies to Poland, Finland, and Albania, they are not discussed in this book. It was not my purpose to offer a complete coverage of Eastern Europe, but to present instead an adequate background study in the field of Danubian government and politics, with emphasis on developments of the postwar era. The method of treatment follows similar lines for each country, surveying its constitutional development, executive and legislative branches of government, partisan politics, problems of domestic and foreign affairs, economic recovery, and regional reconstruction. In postwar Europe political parties have gradually emerged as the primary instruments of national power, as the most significant media of expressing individual or group interests. The partisan politics of Danubian Europe have clearly mirrored Communist strategies, the tactical hegemony of the Soviet, and the ever-present impact of its ideology; therefore, special attention has been devoted to the increasing role of parties on the scene of domestic politics, and to outlining their prewar roots in society, their present activities, and their possible future progress.

My interest in this region derives from twenty-one years of residence

in Central Europe, combined with a long-standing and intensive study of Danubia. An analysis of the various steps taken in the political reconstruction of Danubian Europe, as well as the forces working against it, requires a balanced approach, and it was my firm desire to remain as impartial as possible in the presentation and evaluation of individual issues, although the interplay of bitter strains of nationalism and the obscurity surrounding certain basic problems do not facilitate objectivity.

I am indebted to Professors C. E. Black of Princeton University and Sigmund Neumann of Wesleyan University, who have read the entire manuscript; to Professor Grayson Kirk of Columbia University, who has read Chapters III, IV, and VIII; to my colleagues, Frederick C. Barghoorn and Vernon Van Dyke, for their helpful advice and encouragement; and to Mr. Robert Tschirky, who prepared the maps.

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ANDREW GYORGY

New Haven, Connecticut
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A. G.

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I • A Heritage of History: Prewar Danubia

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Exposed to widely divergent political and cultural currents, the Danube Valley constitutes an effective corridor between Central Europe and Asia Minor. Its destinies have been conditioned by the rise, full development, and gradual decay of two empires, the Ottoman and Habsburg realms. Both empires succeeded in consolidating their power simultaneously, for the peak of Turkish prowess in Europe, the decisive victory over Hungarian armies at Mohács in 1526, offered the Habsburgs their chance to complete the building of an empire. Paradoxically, the two powers disappeared together from the scene of South-eastern European politics; the final exit of Turkish rule from Europe in 1918 also saw the collapse of its principal antagonist, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

The breakup of empires basically modified the structure of Danubian Europe and prepared the ground for new political foundations. The centuries-old pattern of rigidly superimposed federal systems and of large-scale multinational states disintegrated overnight. The slogan of national self-determination emerged triumphantly as new countries pressed forward into the vacuum left by the dissolving empires. Existing power relationships were drastically altered, firmly established boundaries redrawn, and national regimes created according to the dictates of the map makers at Versailles.

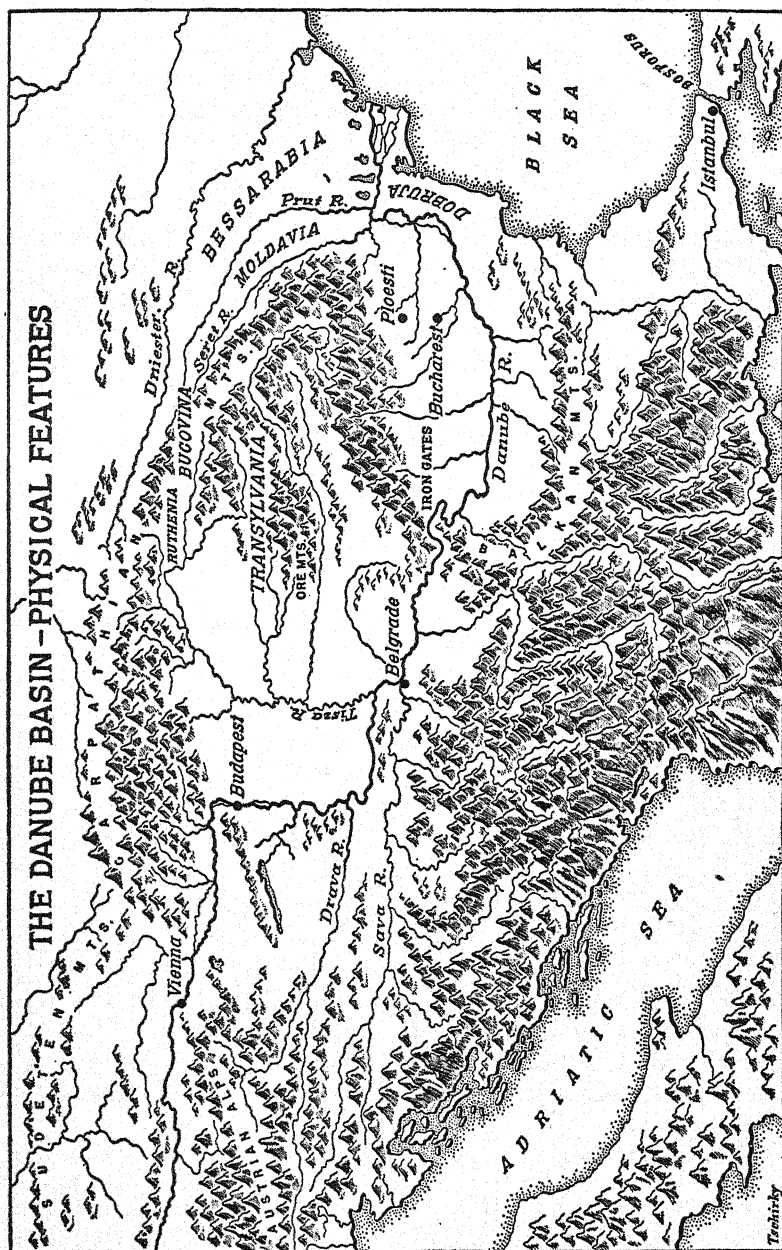
Several basic factors are responsible for the inevitable and persistent changes in Danubian state patterns. Particularly significant in determining political processes are the geography of the region, the complicated ethnic groupings of its people, and the intrusion of great powers; their combination has developed the intricate power relationships of Danubian countries.

## THE GEOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND OF DANUBIAN EUROPE

The Danube Basin serves as the eastern gateway of Europe. It is cut in two by the Carpathian Mountains, which form the northern boundary toward Poland and the eastern frontier toward Soviet-occupied Bucovina, finally turning south to meet the Danube at the Iron Gates. Although the Carpathians present a formidable geographic barrier, they can be crossed easily by a number of strategically located passes. The arclike expanse of the Carpathians surrounds the much-contested province of Transylvania, consisting of rich forests and uplands, and a few river valleys of fertile soil. On either side of these mountains are open plains, now parts of Hungary in the west, and of Rumania and the Soviet Union in the east. The western plain centers around the middle Danube and has distinct, historically important natural boundaries. These are the Moravian hills and the Carpathians in the north, the foothills of the Austrian Alps in the west, the hill ranges of Croatia in the south. The eastern plain, truly the "breadbasket" of Southeastern Europe, stretches from the Danube northward until it merges into the steppes of the Ukraine. It includes the strictly Danubian plain of Walachia, the provinces of Moldavia, Bessarabia, and, farthest to the south, Dobruja. The latter two have been prominent geographic bones of contention between Rumania and the Soviet Union, and Rumania and Bulgaria. They are parts of the open steppes of the East, of the grassy highway which leads without a break deep into Asia.<sup>1</sup> The political disputes which arose around Bessarabia and Dobruja were considerably complicated by the absence of satisfactory and stable natural boundaries that could have subdivided these provinces into tangible and definite political units.

The whole plains region is mainly agricultural, centered around the production of cereals. The raising of livestock and dairy farming flourish around urban centers, which are also the nuclei for the incipient, mostly primitive, industries of Danubian Europe. The southern sections of Transylvania and the big capital cities of Budapest, Bucharest, and Belgrade have developed notable manufacturing industries in the interbellum period. The slow process of industrialization is based on the scattered, but significant mineral wealth of the region. The most important mineral deposits are the oil wells of Ploesti in Rumania, the gold and salt of the Ore Mountains in Transylvania, the coal of central Hungary and southern Transylvania, the rich bauxite deposits of Hun-

<sup>1</sup> Numbered notes appear at end of each chapter.



gare, the chrome, copper, and bauxite deposits of Yugoslavia, and the immense timber resources of Ruthenia, Transylvania, and Moldavia.

With limited access to the Black Sea and with only two or three second-rate Rumanian and Bulgarian seaports serving the entire area, most trade is carried on the Danube and passes through its well-developed ports. The Danube affords a waterway across Europe connecting the great industrial Northwest, its concentrations of population and industry, with the distant granaries of Central-Eastern Europe. In its tortuous course the Danube alternately cuts across narrow mountain ranges and wide lowlands which have important effects on the regime of the river and on navigation.<sup>2</sup> It crosses the mountains of the Swabian Jura, the Bohemian massif, the western Carpathians, the volcanic ranges of central Hungary, and the Transylvanian Alps. It also connects a series of rather well-defined basins, the Bavarian and Viennese plateaus, with the broad plains of Hungary and Rumania, as it flows over 1800 miles from the Black Forest in southwestern Germany to the Black Sea. The upper reaches of the Danube lie in Bavaria, now under American occupation, but 250 miles from its source it enters the four-power occupation zones of Austria. From there on the river passes through or borders on countries which are now integral parts of Russia's Europe. These are the eastern part of Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, and a strip of the Soviet Ukraine.\* The river, which cuts across a historic region comprising over 300,000 square miles, is thus a vital factor in the lives of about 75,000,000 people and six different states. Of these Austria has an area of 32,000 square miles and a population of 7,000,000. Czechoslovakia has an area of 50,000 square miles with a population of about 13,000,000. Hungary spreads over an area of 35,900 square miles and has a population of 8,900,000. Yugoslavia's area is 96,000 square miles and population 15,700,000. Located at the lower end of the Danube, Bulgaria has an area of 42,800 square miles and a population of 8,900,000, while Rumania extends over an area of 91,900 square miles with a population estimated (in 1947) at about 16,000,000.

In spite of its great strategic importance, the Danube Valley faces a certain geographical disadvantage as an international trade route.

\*The reader should bear in mind that the Danubian territories annexed by the U.S.S.R. fall into two categories: those annexed recently to the Ukrainian S.S.R. (Zakarpatskaya oblast from Czechoslovakia, and Chernovitskaya oblast in the north and Izmailskaya oblast in the south on the Black Sea, from Rumania), and the bulk of Bessarabia excluding the seacoast, which was annexed to the Moldavian S.S.R.

River traffic between the wars was low, never exceeding about 7.5 million tons annually. This volume compared unfavorably with other continental rivers not strikingly better situated. The relatively low level of this traffic reflected to a large extent the economic underdevelopment of the riparian countries, all of a predominantly agrarian background, and the cumbersome administrative formalities which held up shipping for several days at each meeting point of political boundary lines. Of the actual traffic on the Danube, internal trade formed a high proportion, and of this the share of Hungary, Rumania, and Yugoslavia was preponderant. Of the outside nations, Germany made particularly intensive use of river navigation in her ambitious drive toward increasing trade relations with Southeastern European countries. Under German control a lively one-way traffic developed on the river: upstream shipping delivered the valuable raw materials of this area to Nazi commercial interests. The most significant products carried on the Danube in this period were oil and cereals from Rumania, ores and timber from Yugoslavia, bauxite, coal, and cereals from Hungary. The relatively low level of prewar Danube traffic and the subsequent shipping monopoly achieved by an outside power underscore the need for river development and careful international control. Both measures would contribute considerably to the economic utilization and progress of the Danube Valley. The harnessing of the waters of the Danube, their direct use for irrigation and for cheap electricity, and their eventual application to the modernization of agriculture and further industrialization, would lead to an increase of prosperity in Central and Southeastern Europe. Politically it would unite the six countries of the Danube Valley by bringing about collaboration on an economic matter of vital importance to all of them.<sup>3</sup>

The communications system of the area depends to a great extent on the Danube River and largely parallels its course. Communications converge around three focal points. A complex network of railways radiates from Vienna and Budapest, where the East-West traffic of the Danube Valley meets the North-South railroad lines connecting Germany with Adriatic and Mediterranean seaports. For several centuries Vienna and Budapest maintained their rank as the foremost centers of culture and commerce in Central Europe, partly by reason of their geographical accessibility and the remarkable variety of their contacts. The valley of the upper Danube, particularly beyond Vienna, is the most direct passageway to Bavaria and the Rhineland. The navigability of the Danube has always been fully utilized in this section.

Both cities functioned as transshipment centers for traffic changing over from river steamer to railway or road transport, and vice versa. The unusual combination of land and river routes converging in these two Danubian capitals was significant in developing their far-reaching contacts; they were the commercial nerve centers of the Habsburg Empire, which constituted a well-balanced economic unit with a domestic market of more than fifty million people. The third focus of communications is the capital of Yugoslavia, Belgrade, where three traditional routes converge. The first is the waterway of the Danube River; the second is the ancient commercial highway through Niš, Sofia, and finally to Istanbul, the principal transcontinental railway line of Central and Eastern Europe. A third route, following a straight north-south line, stretches along the valleys of the Morava and Vardar rivers and connects two historic terminal points: Belgrade in the north and Salonika in the south. This important wedge in the surrounding mass of the Balkan Mountains is the famous military highway, the *soft underbelly* of Southern Europe. Along the natural geographic corridor of these river valleys "the great invasions and migrations have passed, both eastwards and westwards, each movement leaving straggling remnants in its wake. The effects of this are only too visible in the ethnography of Eastern Europe."<sup>4</sup>

### ETHNIC BACKGROUND

The framework of Danubian Europe provides a setting for racial groups so numerous and heterogeneous that it appears almost impossible to find any common ground on which all could meet. Deep ethnic cleavages have been responsible for religious and political differences which further separate individual nationalities. Who could work the miracle of discovering a common interest among the Germans, the Slavs, the Magyars, and the Rumanians? This racial conglomeration was considerably aggravated by the ceaseless movement of population which persisted in Central and Eastern Europe until the twentieth century.<sup>5</sup> Directed along certain definite geographic avenues by the configuration of the Danube Valley and its surrounding plains, this large-scale migration of peoples pressed forward and surged back from highlands and other natural refuges as conditions of military security varied. The constant shifts in population promoted both ethnic mixture and cultural interchange.

On the whole, four successive cultural influences have left their imprint on Danubian Europe. Chronologically they represent a Hellenic-

Byzantine, a Slavic, and a Turkish-Oriental layer of civilization, and an increasing Western-Occidental influence. The four phases can be separated chronologically but could hardly be limited to definite geographic areas. There are numerous places in Danubia where at least two or three of these layers, of sharply differing ethnic influences, are superimposed on each other. The minority problems of Croatia, Transylvania, and Slovakia are tangible results of strongly conflicting religious and cultural impacts localized within the confines of relatively small provinces.

#### SLAVIC NATIONALITIES

The most significant racial impact was the westward migration of the Slavs which began as early as the third century of the Christian Era. By the time of the Middle Ages Muscovy was a vastly increased power in the East. A homogeneous Russian nation, united, took the place vacated by Mongol invaders and swallowed up a number of smaller nationalities. Bound together by language and by similar cultural traits, the Slavic peoples established themselves throughout the greater part of Central Europe and became predominant in the population of the Danube Valley. The original distribution of the Slavic peoples on the eastern plains has not changed much in recent centuries, with the exception of the Magyars' forcible entry into the basin of Pannonia, today's Hungary.<sup>6</sup> The Slavs separated into two large and fairly distinct groups, the *Western* and *Southern Slavs*. The former settled most of the territory east of the Elbe River and at present comprise the Poles, the Czechs of Bohemia and Moravia, and the Slovaks. The Western Slavs are largely Roman Catholics and only minor linguistic differences exist among them. The Southern group is separated from the other Slavs by the Austrian-Germans, the Magyars, and the Rumanians who have settled along the middle and lower sectors of the Danube Valley. The Southern Slavs include such politically significant and highly articulate groups as the Roman Catholic Slovenes and Croats, the Greek Orthodox Serbs and Bulgarians. In the Southern part of the Balkan Peninsula the Slav-speaking populations form the Macedonians, a racially confused and mixed group which has been alternately claimed by the Bulgarians and the Serbs.

*The Czechs and Slovaks.*—Of all Western Slavic groups, the Czechs were the most outstanding in wielding intellectual leadership and in asserting a spirit of political initiative. Long settlement within a well-

defined region of geographical individuality has undoubtedly aided the cause of Czech unity. The kingdom of Bohemia for many centuries formed a prominent part of the Holy Roman Empire. The early Renaissance north of the Alps centered at the court of Charles IV, who was German emperor and who founded in 1348 the University of Prague. Czech political independence vanished in the military disaster of 1620, the battle of the White Mountain, which marked the beginning of three hundred years of Austrian political and economic control. With a liberalization of the Habsburg regime and the progress of education and industrialization, the nineteenth century brought a revival of Czech national consciousness. It was oriented in a definitely democratic and Western sense, as embodied in the enlightened and rich writings of Thomas G. Masaryk (1850-1937), who became the first president of the new Czechoslovak Republic in 1918. The republic, created in the wake of the swift dissolution of the Habsburgs' Empire, included as its principal groups both Czechs and Slovaks.

The political association of Czechs and Slovaks is based on similarities of language and religion, and on kinship of race. However, important differences in tradition and historical background between the two communities have asserted themselves in powerful separatist tendencies in Slovakia. For almost a thousand years the Slovaks have been politically cut off from the Czechs and formed part of the kingdom of Hungary. There has never been an independent Slovak state, and the recent puppet province, created by Hitler after the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in 1939, showed no vitality in its brief but inglorious history. Another traditional difference has been in the prevailing economic interests of the two people. Influenced by the mountainous terrain of their province, the Slovaks are hillsmen whose low standards of farming and limited industrial practice compare unfavorably with the highly developed economic structure of the Czech provinces. The geographic isolation of Slovakia also helped to make its people conservative and somewhat reactionary in their political beliefs, as if they had been completely cut off from the main intellectual currents of Central European life. The majority of the Slovak people are deeply attached to the Catholic Church, but it was the Protestant minority which advocated a union with the Czechs. The internal conflict was sharpened by the prominent role which this small Lutheran community played; it produced several notable Slovak politicians of the recent period and frequently influenced major provincial policies.

As a result of the disruptive forces in Slovakia, the Czech Republic



of 1918 was based on a delicate structure which could not withstand many violent outside pressures: the controversial union of the state-forming peoples had many flagrant weaknesses. Slovakia, with its people of divided loyalties, was one of the worst zones of friction. Despite separatist tendencies, the Slovak province was desperately needed by the Czechs to preserve the country's dominant position in Danubian Europe. On the basis of the past thirty years it is difficult to visualize a permanent solution equally satisfactory to Czechs and Slovaks.

*The Serbo-Croats.*—The Serbs and Croats offer another example of two neighbors speaking similar languages and yet, as a result of historical development, representing contrasting civilizations. A difference of creed has greatly complicated their temporary union in the new state of Yugoslavia: the Croats are Roman Catholics, while the Serbs are members of the Greek Orthodox Church. The former were long connected with the Habsburg Empire, fully exposed to Italian culture in the border province of Dalmatia and later receptive to German influences. The latter were more directly affected by the long period of Turkish hegemony in the Balkans and focused their political interests primarily toward the South and the East, toward Macedonia, the Vardar Valley, Thessaly, and Epirus. The proud Serb Empire of Stephen Dushan, who ruled from 1331 to 1355, actually included all these territories with their mixed population of Serbs, Greeks, Bulgars, and Albanians. Although his ambitious realm quickly disintegrated and fell prey to Turkish invasion, the memory of past glory led the Serbs of the twentieth century to claim Albania and Macedonia. A series of fratricidal wars were fought for the possession of these two provinces, first centering attention on the perennial "Balkan question." The union of Serbs and Croats is a difficult problem, in many respects a close parallel to the precarious relations of Czechs and Slovaks.\* Geography is largely responsible for the basic differences in the cultural outlook of the two principal peoples of Yugoslavia. The Croats have been deeply influenced by regional features of the Istrian Peninsula and the plains of southern Danubia, while the Serbs were conditioned by the isolated valleys and rugged mountain chains of the central Balkans.

*The Bulgars.*—The Bulgars received their name from a Mongolian tribe which migrated from Central Asia to the Volga River and thence

\* The problem of contemporary Yugoslavia is further complicated by the presence of a third Slavic group, the Slovenes. For their role in the state, see the introductory pages of Chapter VI "Yugoslavia."

to the Danube, subjected the Slavs of this region, and assimilated them. The process of assimilation was so complete that their physical characteristics cannot be distinguished from those of their Slavic neighbors. Bulgarian rule in Central Europe culminated with the empire of Tsar Simeon, who at the beginning of the tenth century established himself as Emperor of the Romans. Under him and his immediate successors the Bulgarian Empire reached from the Danube to the Aegean, from the Black Sea to Albania. It later collapsed under the pressure of Turkish invaders, who ruthlessly dominated Bulgaria for about five hundred years and almost entirely obliterated its national consciousness.

Bulgarian reawakening in the second half of the nineteenth century dreamt of another empire, stretching from the Danube to the Aegean, from the Black Sea to Italy. Bulgaria's search for empire almost succeeded in the abortive peace treaty of San Stefano in 1878 and expressed itself in repeated national disasters in the course of the twentieth century, when the country participated in four major wars in a thirty-year period. Bulgarians belong to the Orthodox Church and their language is Slavic. The factors of race, religion, and language should have thus contributed to a better understanding between Bulgarians and the people of Serbia. Yet, even prior to World War I, a long and deadly feud separated the two countries, and in spite of a common Slavic background and features of obvious affinity, several bitter conflicts aggravated the turbulent scene of Balkan politics. The ill-fated military enterprises of the Bulgarians began in an endeavor to evict the Turks from the Balkans and were determinedly continued against Rumania, Serbia, and Greece in the service of ingrained territorial aspirations. Anxious to settle outstanding claims against her neighbors, Bulgaria willingly joined the Axis powers in the nineteen thirties. Along with the other German satellites of Danubian Europe, Hungary and Rumania, in 1941 she was again drawn into the maelstrom.

#### NON-SLAVIC NATIONALITIES

*The Magyars.*—The route traveled by the Magyars was similar to that of the Bulgarian migration. Leaving the steppes of Central Asia, they moved slowly westward and gradually established themselves on the big Danubian plain in the very heart of Europe. They are of Asiatic origin with a basic mixture of Finnish-Ugrian and Turkish race and language. Once settled in Danubia, they swiftly conquered the surrounding Slavic tribes and destroyed the remnants of a once proud Moravian empire. By an interesting process of cultural assimilation the Magyars aban-

doned their nomadic habits, converted their economy from pastoralism to cereal cultivation, and assumed the more advanced ways of life of the Slavic settlers. They also ceased to terrorize their neighbors and about the year 1000 organized the political structure of a new state. For more than nine hundred years the Magyar state played the significant, although negative, role of preventing direct contact between the Western Slavs of Danubia proper and the Southern Slavs of the Balkan Peninsula. Its continued existence in Central Europe proved to be a formidable hindrance to Pan-Slavic ideals and dreams of territorial expansion. While the inhabitants of Hungary gradually succumbed to the more peaceful features and higher standards of a Slavic civilization, they have always retained their language, which remains one of the purest in Europe, unchanged in its original form and structure.

A detached group of the Magyar people, the *Székelys* (or Szeklers, frontier guardsmen) penetrated the neighboring province of Transylvania at an early date. In the Middle Ages Transylvania became the racially unique meeting place of Rumanians, Hungarians, and Germans, the latter the descendants of colonists brought in from Saxony and settled there by early Hungarian kings. The presence of large Magyar and German minorities in this province can be explained by the defense needs of Hungary, which tried to develop in Transylvania a strong eastern bulwark against the threatening invasion of Tartars and Turks. The problem was complicated by the traditional resistance of both Székelys and Saxons to Rumanian attempts to absorb them; until this day they have retained national characteristics of their own. As long as Rumania lays claim to all of Transylvania, the ethnic integrity of these large unassimilated minority groups will constitute a real threat to her future political existence. The Székelys have lent particular vigor to Hungarian revisionism, which has consistently advocated their return to the "motherland" and eventual reunion with the main body of the Magyars.

*The Rumanians.*—Most of the history of Rumania is a record of domination by outside peoples. First the Turks and then the Russians ruled over Rumania and, although their control was frequently more nominal than real, the country did not achieve complete independence until 1878. The Rumanians, or Walachs, claim to be descendants of the Roman settlers in the ancient frontier province of Dacia. During the second century the Romans conquered this province and established agricultural communities along with frontier posts. Roman rule lasted

less than two hundred years, after which the barbarian onslaught of Goths, Tartars, Slavs, Turks, and Magyars swept across the strategically located provinces of Rumania. During these invasions the peasant inhabitants of the plains retreated to the surrounding highlands and succeeded in preserving their traditions and language, which is based on Latin and is the main reminder of their Roman origin. "Considering the many vicissitudes of its history," remarks one author, "the Romanic language of Rumania is a remarkable survival."<sup>7</sup>

Some of the new conquerors ruled for a time and then withdrew, while others settled on the land and in most instances were absorbed by the Rumanians. In turn, each successive invasion left its mark on the culture, language, and characteristics of the local people; accordingly, the present population of the country is of a decidedly mixed race, with Slavic blood particularly important among the peasants of the eastern provinces. Despite the close attachment to an ancient Latin tongue, the Slavic impact has been direct and all-pervasive in Rumania. Religion, for example, is not of Roman origin, for the majority of the people are members of the Greek Orthodox Church. The sharp differences separating Roman Catholicism from the Orthodox Church have been decisive forces in hindering friendly relations between the nationalities of this region. This religious boundary has further estranged the Magyars and Rumanians of Transylvania, precipitating intellectual conflict and political friction in a province which was never noted for understanding and tolerance.<sup>8</sup>

*The Germans.*—The eastward penetration of the Germans began in the eleventh and continued throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when the newly formed borderlands encouraged a process of systematic colonization. Consequently, enterprising German colonists moved in large numbers and soon settled in the feudal principalities of the Danube Valley. The kings of Poland and Bohemia invited German peasants, and so did the rulers of Hungary, who opened up the sparsely settled southern sections of Transylvania to forefathers of the present, racially rather isolated, Saxon community. Austria was also thoroughly Germanized in this period, which saw large-scale continental population movements from West to East and witnessed the birth of new racial boundaries across the expanse of Danubian Europe.

This colonization came to an end in the fourteenth century, when the peoples of Poland and Hungary began to resist Germanization, expressing their resentment over the influx of Western immigrants. A

hiatus of several hundred years ensued, and the migration of Germans was not resumed until the seventeenth century, when Bohemia and southern Hungary were again in a receptive mood. Danubian Europe certainly offered better economic opportunities than Germany itself, riddled by wars and bloody revolutions. Northern Bohemia was gradually settled by ancestors of the Sudeten Germans of Munich fame. This sizable minority group soon developed traits of fanatical chauvinism and bitterly antagonized local Czech and Austrian inhabitants. Similarly nationalistic and ambitious groups of Germans settled in the vicinity of Budapest, in Croatia, and in parts of Serbia. They remained compact and unassimilated alien bodies in most Danubian countries and fell easy prey to twentieth-century Pan-German theories of blood, soil, and race. The *Auslandsdeutsche* (Germans abroad) thus practically invited the disaster that struck them after World War II in the form of expulsion from their homes and forcible repatriation to Germany.

On the whole, European history and regional politics have produced an extraordinary mixture of nationalities. It is difficult to see how the principle of self-determination could ever lead to a satisfactory political settlement in the Danubian region.<sup>9</sup> If there is a solution, it would probably involve the adoption of a system of complete national equality among the inhabitants of Danubia. The transformation of this region into a true "eastern Switzerland" has frequently been advocated as the best means of assuring each ethnic group a full-fledged national home. If broad-minded principles of this type could prevail and find application amidst the confused political barriers of the Danube Valley, this region could contribute materially to the peace of war-torn Europe.\*

#### THE INFLUENCE OF OUTSIDE POWERS (1918-1941)

The fate of Danubian Europe is inevitably shaped by the political and economic pressures of great powers. The breakup of large imperial units and the appearance of small, inexperienced nations merely increased this influence in the Danube Basin. The new countries were devoid of natural defenses and too weak, singly or together, to improvise artificial barriers against external pressures. Following World War I this complex area of badly mixed peoples, which in the past had so often been invaded, conquered, and put to the sword, was divided along

\* For a more detailed analysis of the minority problem, particularly as it affected Danubian Europe in the crucial period of 1918-1941, see section entitled "The Pressure of Internal Forces (1918-1941)" in this chapter.

great power lines. With its abundant natural riches and key strategic position athwart many of the world's principal lines of communication, the Danubian Basin again became a veritable magnet for outside forces.<sup>10</sup>

Four great powers were particularly concerned with Danubian Europe in the interwar period. Chronologically speaking, these pressures originated with France, Italy, Germany, and the Soviet Union. All four types of external influences had certain basic features in common. They combined economic, political, and military weapons in an effort to gain control over key countries in Central Europe. Complicated trade pacts usually preceded political agreements which, in turn, led to closely coordinated military treaties providing for mutual assistance against aggressor countries. Once these preliminary steps were accomplished, two or three of the smaller Danubian "orbit nations," subjected to the same set of outside pressures, frequently combined with each other into regional groupings. As a result, more or less informal unions of countries motivated by parallel interests appeared in Danubia, exerting considerable influence on the political development of the entire region.

France was first on the scene. This was natural, since the Treaty of Versailles had made her supreme in continental Europe. Her post-Versailles power manifested itself through the most important of the regional groups, the Little Entente. Between 1919 and 1934 this alliance system, composed of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania, was the only stable and cohesive force to emerge in Central Europe. France was considered the special protector of the three nations, and their liberation from the yoke of the Habsburg Monarchy was attributed exclusively to her prestige and power on the Continent. The aggressive diplomacy of such French statesmen as Clemenceau, Poincaré, and Barthou kept high the respect for France and assured her a decisive role in Danubian affairs. This influence was not seriously shaken either by the profound internal dissensions of French politics in the turbulent period of 1934-1938 or by the initial political successes of Hitler.<sup>11</sup> Inspired by France, the Little Entente was organized in 1921 with two main diplomatic achievements in mind. The primary aim was to maintain the *status quo* established by the peace treaties of Versailles. The secondary consideration was to reconstitute and solidify the shaky economic and political foundations of Central Europe. To promote the first objective the three governments concluded bilateral treaties providing military guarantees against aggression by Hungary

or Bulgaria, and closely collaborated in resisting all threats to revise the existing order. In many ways the Little Entente states were anxious to perpetuate the sharp division of Danubian Europe into victorious *status quo* countries and defeated revisionist states; for example, they firmly opposed attempts to restore their common enemies, the Habsburgs, to the throne of Hungary.

In 1930 and 1933 significant steps were taken to formalize the loose collaboration of the three governments in a series of comprehensive treaties. A Pact on the Organization of the Little Entente, signed in Geneva in February 1933, created a permanent council in charge of a concerted foreign policy of the three nations. The foreign ministers of the Entente countries were to meet at least three times a year for the discussion of joint policies and decisions. Each state also obligated itself not to make outside political agreements without the previous consent of the other members. As explicitly stated by Eduard Benes, then foreign minister of Czechoslovakia, the three members of the Little Entente desired to function as a distinct international unit. When Germany withdrew from the League of Nations in October 1933, the three Danubian governments reaffirmed the necessity of united action in terms of preparing their own common economic program and of "getting ready to face whatever struggles lay ahead."<sup>12</sup> As the international political situation grew more intense and threatening, further treaties were negotiated to extend the bilateral-assistance pacts indefinitely, to provide for increased economic collaboration, and to institute a mutual system of conciliation and arbitration.

Outside Danubian Europe the Little Entente found its principal support in France, which was bound to the three states by an overwhelming community of interests. They all shared a belief in the strict maintenance of the order laid down in the peace treaties. Within this narrow frame of reference France showed a real understanding of the needs and aspirations of these small nations, becoming their natural protector and leading spokesman. Sponsorship of the group was not limited to moral encouragement but involved substantial financial assistance and such specific further commitments as the mutual-aid treaty with Czechoslovakia negotiated in 1925. Other French alliances of this period included the nonaggression and consultation pacts with Rumania (June 1926) and with Yugoslavia (November 1927). The French treaty-network in Eastern Europe was completed by a tight military alliance with Poland, which was brought into the same ideological camp with the Little Entente states. For at least a decade the wide circle of the

traditional and newly won Danubian friendships of France succeeded in exerting a strong stabilizing force.

French influence further asserted itself through the League of Nations and, on a more regional basis, through the Balkan Entente. The League obviously put the entire weight of an organized international world behind the existing European system. This conservative effect was particularly visible in the field of reconstruction loans, given by the League to Austria (1922), Hungary (1923), and Bulgaria (1926). The loans were intended to appease the recalcitrant nations of the postwar period and to bring the three states nearer to the orbit of the Western *status quo* powers. In spite of official French attempts, Hungary and Bulgaria remained essentially unreconciled and vigorous advocates of a full-fledged treaty revision. The Balkan Entente was formally constituted in February 1934 and included in its membership Rumania, Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey. It extended the fundamental ideas of the Little Entente throughout most of the Balkan Peninsula; its pact of organization, conferences, periodic consultations, and over-all objectives resembled in many ways those of the Little Entente. Its scope, however, was seriously restricted by the nonmembership of Bulgaria, key to several vitally serious Balkan-Danubian problems. Bulgaria was unwilling to join the Entente and persisted in her refusal to commit herself to any multilateral agreement which accepted the *status quo* and implied a renunciation of all territorial claims. Consequently, the far-reaching military agreements at first envisaged by France and her diplomatic partners were gradually whittled down to a modest set of guarantees to assist each other in case of an attack by a Balkan state.\* By the middle of the nineteen thirties France's inherent weakness became apparent, and her inability to implement military and political commitments alienated several of the dependent Danubian countries.

French interest in this area greatly irritated the Italian government, which felt that it was more directly connected with Danubian Europe than was France. This was considered the most appropriate region for the realization of Italian imperialist ambitions. While France willingly assumed the role of patron and defender of the satisfied Little Entente states, Italy, frustrated in her own attempts to gain sweeping control over these states, became the principal sponsor of dissatisfied nations, of an explosive revisionism in Central Europe. As a result, Italian policy

\* This guarantee of assistance was obviously directed against Bulgaria and a minor outsider, Albania, which was never invited to join the Balkan Entente because of its marked subservience to Italy.



concentrated on associating itself closely with Hungary and Bulgaria, and to a lesser extent with Austria and Albania. The Western Powers themselves granted Italy a special position in Albania and she hastened to establish a virtual protectorate over that small country. The next move led to an alliance with Hungary and an increasingly vocal championship of Bulgarian claims in Macedonia. Under Mussolini's personal initiative, Italy then took up a clearly aggressive attitude aimed at the isolation of Yugoslavia from other Slavic countries and its treaty partners in the Balkans. The purpose was obvious, for the presence of a Slav state in control of the eastern shores of the Adriatic had immediate and dangerous consequences for Italy.

The first official reaction to these dangers came in the form of the Rome Protocols, signed in March 1934 by Italy, Austria, and Hungary. The protocols served the purpose of a diplomatic reply to various Eastern European pacts and to a slowly crystallizing Balkan Entente. The three basic agreements of the protocols provided for consultation on political matters of common interest, and for broad economic co-operation. Italy granted preferential tariffs to its smaller partners, and special treatment for Hungarian wheat was guaranteed by both Italy and Austria. Austrian and Hungarian exports were reoriented through Fiume for Hungary, and Trieste for Austria. Within the same treaty-framework Austria and Hungary concluded separate currency arrangements to develop their mutual trade relations. Italy's interventionist policy and immediate concern with Danubian Europe reached a climax in 1934 and 1935, when her government took definite, energetic steps to develop the region into a bulwark against swiftly increasing German influence. By 1936 Italy was so preoccupied with the conquest of Ethiopia and the pronounced power struggle in the Mediterranean that her interest in Central European affairs gradually subsided.

German influence represented an enormous force with which all of Danubia had to reckon. Beginning in 1933, the meteoric rise of an expansive and aggressive Germany opened a new chapter in Central European history. The threat to all states southeastward of her, but particularly to Austria and Czechoslovakia, was immediate. Although the Little Entente succeeded in signing new statutes which drew the three key states closer together, and Czechoslovakia even concluded an important military pact with the Soviet Union, by 1935 Germany had scored several diplomatic victories in the east. One of the first major moves was to separate Poland from the Danube Basin. In return for a ten years' pact which assured her of a temporary relaxation of German

pressure, Poland joined the Nazi government in attacking the collective-security system of small states centered around Czechoslovakia.

National Socialist schemes for gradual infiltration and complete domination were greatly aided by the lack of organization, cooperation, and resistance of individual Danubian governments. Strategic, economic, and social factors contributed considerably to such phenomenal German successes of the interwar period as the *Anschluss* of Austria in 1938 and the complete collapse of Czechoslovakia in 1939. Strategically, German geopolitical planning certainly helped to undermine the destinies of Danubian Europe. Spurred on by Hitler's access to power, the Munich school of General Haushofer openly discussed the best means of firmly establishing German power in Central Europe. In Haushofer's words, "cut off from further dynamic development in space, *Zwischeneuropa* (In-Between-Europe) will have to be dominated by an outside power; it will be just as unable to avoid the relentless pressure of world politics as Germany, Austria or Switzerland."<sup>13</sup>

Nazi Germany usually fastened economic claws on its Danubian victims before drawing them under the sharp beak of German militarism. Driven by their overwhelming fear of German occupation, members of existing Danubian blocs, such as the Little and Balkan Ententes, were anxious either to conclude bilateral arrangements with the German government or to enter into complicated clearing and barter agreements which markedly favored Germany's economy and drained their own region of its most valuable raw material resources. In exchange for Rumanian oil and Hungarian bauxite, Germany dumped cheap, worthless, mass-produced goods on Danubian markets, thus effectively undermining the foreign-trade structure of the entire region. The Nazi government deliberately pursued a totalitarian commercial policy which used its own brand of trade agreements as instruments of a belligerent purpose. As the country most willing to absorb raw materials and agrarian surpluses, Germany gradually built up a trade monopoly that made possible dictation of prices and formulation of its partners' policies. Uncooperative governments were soon replaced by more "reasonable" regimes, and even countries successfully resisting the pattern of economic penetration were forced to adopt at least a policy of benevolent neutrality. The disastrous depression of the 1930's drove Danubian states further and further toward subservience to Germany, combined with an undesirable system of autarchy. The universal tendency to seek self-sufficiency within even the smallest national units prevented the realization of any far-reaching plan of Danubian co-

operation. Industrial states began to develop their agriculture; agricultural states, their industry. The shortsighted economic policies of key Danubian regimes helped to promote the Nazis' determined effort to split up valuable alliances and regional pacts.

As soon as this process was accomplished, the first major, although negative, phase of German domination was also successfully achieved. Recent statements to the effect that the Germans had no well-organized plan for Central Europe cannot be accepted without major qualifications. Although Ribbentrop's testimony at the Nürnberg trials is frequently cited to the effect that "the Führer had no program of what was going to be done about Europe, about how it was going to be reconstructed,"<sup>14</sup> the Nazis' drive through Southeastern Europe was aimed at thoroughgoing domination. The incredible poverty of the large peasant masses acted as a social force facilitating the sweep of Nazi ideas. It led to serious crises and widespread disturbances in each of the Danubian countries, gradually causing the breakdown of post-war democracies and their inevitable replacement by police dictatorships.<sup>15</sup> The new dictatorships represented various brands of local, native fascism and found it easy as well as expedient to fall in line with the policies of Hitler's Germany. Instead of sponsoring long-delayed and necessary social reforms, these governments hastily embarked upon rearmament programs; their large-scale and steady military expenditures further undermined the economic structure of individual countries.

The political aspects of Hitler's New Order were just as disruptive to Danubian cooperation as were its economic and social features. The one-sided and ruthless exploitation of the entire region not only stifled its economic development but drove its most valuable and constructive statesmen into exile, ruined the bases of constitutional government, and produced a number of quisling regimes. An essential element of Nazi success was the ruthless application of the familiar tactical principle of Divide and Rule. Through a long series of one-sided diplomatic decisions climaxed by the Munich Pact (1938), the Treaty of Moscow (1939), and the Vienna Award (1940), the Germans succeeded in turning governments aggressively against their immediate neighbors and in substituting mutual hostility for such promising alliances as the Balkan or Little Ententes. The enhancement of power and prestige, territorial expansion, strategic frontiers, the keeping down of hereditary enemies—such aims seemed immensely more important than political cooperation between nations. This atmosphere of widespread distrust and

animosity opened the door to swift conquest and to a total military occupation of Danubian Europe.

Russia is the fourth major power whose past diplomatic interests and recent policies greatly influenced Danubian history. Long before the relentless Soviet expansion of our days, Russian imperial rivalries and dynastic ambitions clearly asserted themselves in the Balkan Peninsula and the lower Danube Valley. Russia played an essential part in the liberation of Serbia, Rumania, and Bulgaria from Turkish rule. In Pan-Slav nationalism she possessed an instrument for the weakening of her rival, the Habsburg Empire, and for the penetration of Central Europe. Throughout the past century and a half her policies toward Southeastern Europe were guided by two attitudes. The principal interest was a positive one, the need of outlets to the open seas. Hence the temptation to acquire control of the Dardanelles and through it access to important Mediterranean trade routes. The negative element was her anxiety to prevent any unfriendly or strong political power from establishing itself in Southern Europe and using it as a convenient springboard for expansion toward the east. Russia's security designs extended to the small states which could easily be exploited by neighboring great powers and turned into offensive bases.

These motivations serve to explain early Russian moves and territorial policies in the Danube Basin. In 1812 she occupied the strategic province of Bessarabia, which assured temporary control over the delta region of the Danube. Starting from this modest geographic nucleus, the Russian government steadily enlarged its sphere of interest until, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, it actually sought to assume the function of protector of small states in the Danubian-Balkan area. This spirit was most obvious in Russian attitudes toward Serbia where, by 1914, she was regarded as a champion of the country's liberation from Austro-Hungarian hegemony. For some of the Slavic countries the "elder brother" appeared in the double role of sponsor and liberator, around whom all hopes and aspirations were enthusiastically centered.<sup>16</sup> Eastern Europe became increasingly aware of the lengthening Russian shadow, of a swiftly developing Russian zone of geographic and political security. Particularly Bulgaria, Rumania, and Hungary seem to have been caught in a crossfire between two ambitious powers, both intent on a more or less peaceful penetration across the Danube Valley. A Berlin-to-Bagdad line of German economic expansion stretched toward the east, precariously balanced by a slow but inexorable westward advance of Russia.

After 1918 Russia's role in Danubia decreased considerably and the ideological menace of a Bolshevik revolution, embodied in the new Communist state, overshadowed all previous power-processes and relationships. It was no longer a matter of localized revolts or of temporary manifestations of a perennially disturbing Eastern question. The Soviets had not only brought revolution to Russia but openly and unhesitatingly proclaimed that they were anxious to carry it to neighboring countries, using underground Communist party cadres to further their global objective. The effects of this determined program were instantaneous and devastating. Russia was kept out of Central European affairs by the victorious great powers of the West, who enthusiastically embarked upon a so-called "barbed-wire" policy. As inaugurated in Paris, this policy deliberately sought to turn the border countries into a rampart against their powerful and dynamic neighbor.<sup>17</sup> A *cordon sanitaire* was erected around Russia's new postwar frontiers, reducing her political and ideological influence on neighboring countries to a minimum. Danubian governments ignored Soviet Russia for several years, and mercilessly crushed all local manifestations of Communism. Hungary had historic reasons for hostility, reinforced by the effects of Béla Kun's disastrous and short-lived experiment in a native variant of Bolshevism. The "white terror" of the Horthy regime in the early nineteen twenties created an active anti-Communist clearing-house in Hungary, a center from which Soviet policies were bitterly contested and openly fought.

Rumania assumed an unfriendly aloofness and resisted all advances by the Soviet. She had benefited greatly by World War I and emerged with significant territorial gains awarded her by the Allies. In exchange, Rumania was supposed to fulfill the significant function of an exposed barrier, an easternmost bulwark against Bolshevism. The royal family and subservient members of its hand-picked cabinets willingly played this role throughout the interwar period. The real stumbling block in Russian-Rumanian relations was the much-disputed province of Bessarabia. Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan signed a treaty with Rumania in 1920 by which the cession of Bessarabia from Russia to Rumania was confirmed. Rumania had to wait seven years for the necessary sanctions because of the hostile attitude of the Russian government, which refused to recognize the legality of this cession. Because of the obvious diplomatic tension Rumania fortified her position by defensive alliances with Poland and France, concluded in 1926. Similar influences and policies prevailed in Bulgaria. The counterrevolutionary

regimes, which succeeded Stambolisky's unique experiments in peasant government (1920-1923), had no dealings with Russia and allied themselves with anti-Soviet forces. Yugoslavia flatly contradicted all former foreign policies of Greater Serbia based on friendship with Russia and enmity toward Germany. Although a nation of South Slavs, its policy did not follow the traditional Slavic orientation. King Alexander's personal hostility to the new Russian rulers set the stage for a rapprochement toward the Western Powers, as exemplified by France and Germany. Throughout the interwar period Czechoslovakia was the only Danubian country which fully understood the strategic necessity of forming an eastern defense zone against Germany. The Czech government, therefore, never adopted openly hostile attitudes toward Russia, nor was it motivated by overwhelming fear of the spread of a Bolshevik revolution. On the contrary, it foresaw the necessity of a close military cooperation with the Soviet Union and joined the Franco-Soviet mutual-assistance pact. Unhappily, the pro-Soviet orientation of Czechoslovakia was no defense against Germany's campaign of psychological warfare, which culminated in the disastrous Munich Conference. Czechoslovakia's subsequent collapse offers perhaps the best illustration of the directness of outside pressures in the Danubian Basin. The history of prewar Danubia is inextricably bound up with imperialist influences hampering the work of regional organization and promoting centrifugal movements of disorganization. The latter have appeared in the guise of local revolts, sectional strife, economic penetration, international bargains, and the permanent phenomena of "Balkan wars." For over thirty years Franco-Italian-German-Soviet rivalry has split this area into several competing and sharply conflicting camps. The four-power struggle, tragically complicated by the parallel discords of native nationalism, has not only retarded economic and social progress but also sowed the seeds of two world wars. Under the impact of modern imperialism, the gradual Europeanization of the Balkans has ground to a halt. Instead, the entire Continent of Europe now appears effectively Balkanized.

#### THE PRESSURE OF INTERNAL FORCES (1918-1941)

The ravages of World War I and the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian monarchical pattern left behind them an atmosphere of mutual distrust and hostility. Governments of the Danubian region, having broken the former imperial constraint, now looked for refuge

behind an alert and suspicious national individualism. Several factors of both political and economic character played a significant role in shaping the ultranationalist ideas of the newly created states.

#### NATIONALISM, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC

One of the principal forces of a militant character has been the attitude of the defeated countries, which showed no signs of accepting the Versailles peace settlements as final. Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria signed the peace treaties under protest, and although their resentment took different forms, the spirit of opposition permeated the entire structure of their domestic life. Resentment against the peace settlements was sharpest in Hungary: the Hungarian government was even more bitterly outspoken in its determination to regain lost provinces than neighboring Austria or Bulgaria in the lower Danube Valley. With revisionism rampant in Southeastern Europe, the victorious countries felt increasingly insecure, although in view of the effective disarmament of the defeated nations there was no actual military danger.<sup>18</sup>

Fear of Habsburg restoration stimulated nationalist policies both in the victor and in the defeated countries. Ex-Emperor Charles I made no effort to regain the Austrian throne but attempted several times to restore his dynasty to the throne of Hungary. Under the shadow of this anxiety, the victor countries applied themselves with great vigor to the creation of military establishments, insisting on seeking safety in isolation from each other and in the development of a strong nationalist spirit. Fear and insecurity thus separated the small Danubian nations and stimulated the appearance of indigenous national systems of education and new cultural institutions designed to serve propaganda purposes. The conflict of nationalisms was made more intense by the heterogeneity of individual countries which tried to hold together different types of provinces and racial groups. The territories which the postwar governments acquired had been integral parts of the national system of their former masters. Now their entire life had to be drastically redirected to comply with the new trends and aspirations of the country to which the map makers of Versailles assigned them. This reorientation was a serious and compelling problem in Czechoslovakia, which had formerly been under two sovereignties; in Rumania, which had been under three; and in Yugoslavia, whose provinces had belonged to five different sovereigns and their conflicting jurisdictions.

Similar difficulties confronted the new countries in the sphere of economic activity. This was true of both the victorious and the defeated

nations. The former were compelled to create a new economic organization out of the various segments of their recently acquired territory, while the latter faced the necessity of adjusting their economic life to their contracted territory and diminished resources. Nationalism seemed to be the salvation from the threatening forces of economic disorganization. The terrible strain of World War I had been felt in all of Danubia. The new governments inherited empty treasuries, a badly operating equipment, and a broken-down system of communications. Withdrawing behind their new boundaries, they wanted to restore their country's economic equilibrium by means of individual, national action. They were anxious to establish their own currency system and their own governmental control over foreign exchanges. Nationalism thus progressed gradually toward strict mutual isolation; political independence inevitably bred economic independence. Beyond the pressing financial needs of the moment the new governments of Danubian Europe were further driven into isolationism by their sincere desire to break away from the economic domination of Vienna. The fear of Vienna and Budapest as dominant political and financial centers of the former Dual Monarchy persisted throughout the nineteen twenties and thirties, and was felt particularly in Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia. This anxiety led to the development of five independent, though strikingly similar, economic organizations within the Danube Valley. Each of the strictly national economies was built on the erroneous notion that political independence was incompatible with economic dependence on foreign countries, even if they were neighbors and could have derived mutual benefits from their association.

The economic implications of excessive nationalism were more far-reaching and serious than is generally realized. They led ultranationalists into advocating complete economic self-sufficiency for their countries. This program was particularly unfortunate for the Danubian states whose territories are small, whose economies are backward and relatively undeveloped. Although their prosperity has always depended on exchanging agricultural products for the manufactured goods of more advanced regions, they have gradually surrounded themselves with high tariff walls calculated to limit imports to a minimum. The slogan of autarchy, immediately pressed into the service of forced industrialization, acted as a powerful stimulus to industrial development. Ultimately the self-sufficiency ideal of extreme nationalism anticipates the necessities of war and considers resort to war as a legitimate instrument of national policy.<sup>19</sup>



The problem of economic nationalism was further complicated by the new "frontiers" established at Versailles. The postwar boundaries cut across a surprisingly large number of economically interdependent areas. With sharp emphasis placed on national self-determination and the complex questions of ethnic delimitation, economic interrelationships were not studied carefully enough and, in general, were relegated into the background. The unfortunate result was that each of the new countries "received whatever resources and equipment happened to be located in the territory assigned to it. . . . Factories were often cut off from their supplies of raw materials and fuel, and vice versa. Mutually dependent industries, in some instances branches of the same industry, became separated by frontiers."<sup>20</sup> Sooner or later every state felt the burden of these territorial maladjustments and the many hastily drawn and economically unjustifiable boundaries. No wonder that revisionism became one of the permanent undercurrents of Central European politics, bringing with it an atmosphere of seething frustration and basic insecurity.

#### THE ROLE OF MINORITIES

Conspicuous among internal forces shaping Danubian destinies was the population problem, the practically insoluble issue of racial minorities. The peace treaties approached this question cautiously and made elaborate provisions for the protection of the rights of minorities. To the extent to which these provisions were carried out and large Slavic and Rumanian minorities of the old Dual Monarchy were actually freed from Austrian and Hungarian rule, the arrangement represented a considerable advance over the Habsburg era. But in the process of redrawing boundaries, large groups of people were again placed under the supremacy of other nations and the disturbing minority problem still remained. Altogether the number of persons made into minorities by the peace treaties was not less than some 25-30 millions, constituting the substantial proportion of about 20-25 per cent of the populations of states to which they were assigned. This situation was further complicated by the dangerous feature that members of the Little Entente, the states most obviously exposed to attack, were also the weakest internally by reason of their large minorities. It is ironic, observes Alfred Cobban, that a settlement supposedly approximating major ethnical divisions should have produced a state like Czechoslovakia, with minorities amounting to almost 35 per cent of the population.<sup>21</sup> Rumania, with 25 per cent, was not much better off. The intense national senti-

ment of the new countries was fatal to hopes of conciliatory minority policies and satisfactory long-range settlements. The nationalities which had emerged triumphant from the war, and had succeeded in shaking off their chains, considered themselves unitary nation-states. Certain Danubian constitutions clearly reflect a trend toward the artificial creation of completely unified states. The preamble of the Czech constitution of 1920 says, for example, "We, the Czecho-Slovak nation, *wishing to consolidate the complete unity of the nation . . .*";\* and the Rumanian constitutions of the interwar period open with the statement: "*The Kingdom of Rumania is a national, unitary and indivisible State.*"\* The danger of leaving large minorities at the mercy of small states motivated by intense national feelings had been foreseen by the Peace Conference. The experts of Versailles devised special treaties guaranteeing basic rights to the minority groups of Central and Eastern Europe. Great hopes were placed on the general acceptance of these treaty arrangements, which, allegedly, represented a significant innovation in the technique of safeguarding minority rights. Unhappily even endorsement by every one of the lesser states in the Danube Valley and the Balkans did little to alleviate the situation.<sup>22</sup>

It is difficult to find accurate categories in which to place the many broken-up, fragmented minority groups of Central and Eastern Europe. In their midst are all classes and types, ranging from humble, politically inarticulate groups to significant and highly civilized communities which had formerly ruled the countries where they were now to become servants. Hugh Seton-Watson distinguishes three separate types of minority problems in Danubian Europe.<sup>23</sup> The first group includes national minorities in the border regions. Their precarious situation is due to a conflict of the ethnical principle with certain historic, strategic, or economic considerations. Northern and western Bohemia serve as best illustrations of this type. Inhabited principally by Germans, they were given to Czechoslovakia in 1918 on the grounds that they were integral parts of the historical kingdom of Bohemia, and for the strategic reason of offering a satisfactory boundary toward Germany. The northern strip of Hungary was taken by Czechoslovakia on the grounds that it was necessary to the economic life of Slovakia, although the population was predominantly Hungarian.

The second type of national minority consists of isolated groups, so-called enclaves, completely surrounded by the ruling majority and

\* Italics mine.

often separated by great distances from their own fellow nationals. The scattered groups of early German settlers, who appeared in typical enclaves from the middle Danube to the eastern Carpathians and the Black Sea, presented a difficult case of isolated minorities, as did the Szeklers of Transylvania and the Jews of Eastern Europe, having no country of their own but distributed unevenly and in large groups throughout the region. Few satisfactory solutions exist for these complex racial problems. The majority nations are faced with the task of either assimilating such enclaves or finding and guaranteeing a suitable place for them in their midst. In the past neither settlement was carried out successfully, and the presence of isolated large groups was usually marked by permanent zones of unneighborly friction.

The third type is represented by minority groups settled in racially mixed regions, in areas of ethnic interpenetration where the problem is one of assuring the peaceful coexistence of several national groups of about equal size. The Danube Valley boasts of a wide assortment of provinces where minority groups are inextricably intermixed, and a large number of ethnically different nationalities are closely crowded together. The Bánát, a long-disputed border province between Yugoslavia and Hungary, is inhabited by Serbs, Croats, Rumanians, Hungarians, and Germans, with smaller groups of Slovaks, Ruthenes, and Slovenes. Dobruja, for decades a geographic bone of contention between Bulgaria and Rumania, has a population of Turks, Bulgarians, Rumanians, Germans, and Greeks. Transylvania, Macedonia, and Bessarabia are equally complicated regions in which the normal social forces making for assimilation have never operated satisfactorily. The dominant nationality made full use of the state apparatus in order to weaken other nationality groups within the country by forcing them into political submission. The bitterness of minorities, in turn, generated irredentist and revisionist movements which undermined the constitutional structure of the state. Although there were local variations in the treatment of minorities, the difficulties created by social oppression, political corruption, and economic exploitation were painfully manifest throughout the entire region. In Danubian areas of mixed population *assimilation* was obviously the occasional exception and *ethnic separation* the rule, characteristic of large empires and small countries alike. In the period of 1918 to 1941 minorities displayed a considerable nuisance value. They presented problems which Central European statecraft, not used to the application of principles of justice, equality, or tolerance, has found insoluble so far.

TRANSITION FROM PARLIAMENTARY TO  
AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES

At a convention in Philadelphia in October 1918 delegates of ten Central and Eastern European nations solemnly pledged incorporation of democratic principles into the organic laws of the governments they were to establish in their liberated homelands. The delegates were Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Slovenes, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Rumanians, Greeks, Croats, and Albanians. Representatives of the United States offered considerable aid in this prospective extension of the democratic process throughout Danubia and the Balkans.

The period 1918-1941 can be divided into two almost equal parts. During the first phase, parliamentary institutions and processes were predominant, while during the second, authoritarian methods became widespread. The chances of a liberal democracy appeared to be vigorous and promising at first. Post-Versailles Europe witnessed a triumphant rebirth of the republican principle. Although national monarchies survived in most Danubian states, except Czechoslovakia and Hungary, the entire area saw a temporary emergence of lively parliaments and responsible groups of ministers. Governments were genuinely concerned with measures of social reform which, long delayed by the war, were badly needed to overcome internal chaos and confusion. The all-out struggle against economic emergencies and the peoples' fervent desire for internal political stability succeeded for a while in combating authoritarian forces inherent in the Danubian region.

Most of the new nations utilized the few years following World War I for remarkable achievements in the cultural, economic, and political fields. Culturally, the chief result of their liberation was the establishment of close relations with the Latin and Anglo-Saxon West and a genuine desire for cooperation with the Western nations. These intellectual efforts were clearly manifested even in those countries of Danubian Europe which for centuries had been under persistent Eastern influence. On economic and social issues considerable progress was achieved in raising the general standard of living. Important advances were made in agricultural techniques, in literacy, in health, and in the general readjustment of national economies to the realities of foreign markets. Politically a genuine desire for cooperation with the Western Powers in the interest of a democratic way of life seemed to be guaranteed by the constitutions of all new Central and Eastern European nations. Later many of these countries lost their faith in collective security and, placed between totalitarian powers, hoped to bolster their position

by strengthening the executive in a way which seriously endangered democratic progress.<sup>24</sup> On the whole, the first phase of postwar development was characterized by several significant factors favoring democracy. An increasing acceptance of the social equality of people, the emergence of strong and educated middle-class leaders, and the gradual extension of popular education militated for a liberal atmosphere and for the appearance of full-blown parliamentary regimes. Representative government was further encouraged by the leading statesmen of this period, brought up in the best French political and diplomatic traditions of the late nineteenth century, and abhorring German-imported ideas of Prussian efficiency, intolerant absolutism, and an executive of unlimited, unchecked governmental powers.

The first significant fissures appeared in the late twenties. Authoritarian tendencies spread rapidly and brought distortions of the new political institutions that encouraged the growth of Western democracy. Everywhere there seemed to be a regression to some form of despotism and arbitrary rule. Danubian regimes passed almost imperceptibly from parliamentary to cabinet government, and from civilian to military rule. Dictatorship—veiled, open, or semiveiled—fastened itself onto the life of peoples and covered ever-wider sections of the surface of public and private activities.<sup>25</sup> By the early thirties the domestic politics of Danubia dissolved into a welter of personal ambitions, jealousies, and rival authoritarianisms. The increasing weakness of liberal political parties, within or without the government, was a contributing factor of primary importance. The majority of parliament members belonged to the official government party, which was more the guardian of a rigid *status quo* than a champion of drastic and liberal reform movements. Beyond the disciplined cohesion of this solid bloc, political life was disorganized and fragmented to the point where authoritarian regimes found little resistance and frequently a genuine response. Native fascism\* swiftly developed among the workers, the poorer peasants, the anti-Semitic middle classes, the unemployed intellectuals, and professional army men. Against this regional background of subversive forces, German National Socialism immediately attracted popularity and set the stage for full-fledged dictatorships. Opposition, built around the big landowners, churches, the orthodox Social Democrats, various representatives of Christian Socialism, and the Jewish sectors of the

\* The term "native fascism" has to be used carefully, for these regimes differed widely from the German and Italian models, and in some instances made valuable contributions.

population, was badly scattered and largely ineffectual. Democracy had no root, no solid foundation here while its opponents were able to draw on extensive and varied *authoritarian traditions*, backed by the historical experience of many centuries.

The weakness of liberal parties and democratic movements was further accentuated by the rapid disintegration of Danubian middle classes, which seemed to suffer from chronic political and economic anemia. They occupied a tenuous in-between zone separating a ruling elite from the backward and submerged masses of the agricultural population. Their precarious position in this social balancing process between extremes was made doubly difficult by the decisive power and shortsighted selfishness of the elite class, and by the political indifference and poverty of the peasants. Members of the middle class, usually of the lower nobility and urban intelligentsia, who owned no land but invested in bonds and securities, lost almost everything through the depreciation of postwar currencies. The loss of economic power inevitably led to a sharp decline in their social prestige, until they belonged more to the proletariat than to a middle class. Measured by Western European standards, a true middle class, composed of politically conscious and responsible urbanized citizens, has never been active or conspicuous in Central European politics.<sup>26</sup> Its near absence in the interwar period had two long-range effects: it contributed to irrational vacillations in the foreign policy of various Danubian regimes, and it hastened the appearance of military dictatorships.

Nurtured by authoritarianism at home and by the initial diplomatic successes of German National Socialism abroad, the new dictatorships were in undisputed control of the domestic situation by the middle thirties. Stoyadinovich in Yugoslavia, General Gömbös in Hungary, King Carol and his hand-picked, subservient cabinets in Rumania, and similarly corrupt and arbitrary royalist governments in Bulgaria displayed the worst features of that curious hybrid, a dictatorship thinly camouflaged by certain parliamentary institutions. Danubian semi-parliamentarianism prided itself on theoretically liberal but actually meaningless electoral laws; on triumphant national elections which unfailingly secured "the handsome victory that normally graces the Balkan government in power";<sup>27</sup> on precariously balanced annual budgets heavily burdened by military appropriations always out of proportion to national wealth or income; on a multiparty system which usually consisted of an overwhelming government bloc and a few sham parties, euphemistically labeled opposition forces, while the real op-

ponents of the regime hid underground. In this political atmosphere the cabinet of ministers gained increasing influence and gradually concentrated all real power in members of its group; the cabinet formed small and tightly disciplined cliques which controlled the major aspects of national administration.

Setting the pattern of postwar government, three ministers emerged rapidly as the wielders of power and authority. These were the ministers of foreign affairs, of the interior, and of war (national defense). The portfolios themselves were monopolized by nationalist leaders of extreme rightist tendencies and by top-ranking officers of the regular armies. Men like General Zhivkovich, head of the Yugoslav Nationalist party throughout the thirties, symbolized the steady ascendancy of the military. A characteristic product of this thoroughly Nazified period, Zhivkovich was the strong man who faithfully served King Alexander as prime minister and was perhaps best known for sentencing the Croat leader, Dr. Vladko Machek, to long-term imprisonment on charges of "planning to undermine and disrupt the State." Although first to yield to Hitler's Germany, Czechoslovakia was the last in succumbing to the gathering forces of native authoritarianism. Unbridled terror and political absolutism ran wild in post-Munich Czechoslovakia and its dissident provinces, Slovakia and Ruthenia. The Munich Conference of 1938 handed over the keys of government to men like Konrad Henlein of the notorious Sudeten German party, Rudolf Beran, right-wing Agrarian prime minister who ruled the new state for over two years without parliamentary discussion and with streamlined decree-power procedures, and the treacherous provincial leaders Joseph Tiso and Béla Tuka, whose disruptive policies never gained autonomy or independence for their ludicrous Slovak republic, but fully succeeded in strengthening Germany's domination of Central Europe. The tragic collapse and partition of Czechoslovakia epitomized the irresistible surge of fascism, the most explosive of all internal forces in the Danube Valley. It also served as a dramatic curtain raiser to the European war and, in a broader sense, to World War II.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. C. A. Macartney, *The Danubian Basin*, Pamphlets on World Affairs, No. 10 (New York, 1939), p. 4.
2. George Kiss, "TVA on the Danube?" *The Geographical Review*, No. 2, 1947, p. 275.

3. Stefan Osusky, "Harnessing the Danube," *The New York Times*, Oct. 5, 1947. The author concludes his discussion of a projected Danube Valley Authority in a surprisingly optimistic vein when stating that "this Danubian system, linked to an international management of the economic resources of the Rhine Valley, the use and development of which is of vital interest to western European nations, would be the soundest, the most practical and efficient foundation for the collaboration, prosperity and peace of Europe."
4. *South-Eastern Europe, A Political and Economic Survey* (London, 1939), p. 3.
5. F. Dvornik, "Western and Eastern Traditions of Central Europe," *The Review of Politics*, Oct. 1947, p. 463. Professor Dvornik's article authoritatively describes how Western culture and politics gained early momentum among the Serbs and the Rumanians. Their proximity to the West was more than a matter of geographic coincidence; the common tie which bound these nations and focused their history was a Western and Christian tradition. Danubian countries have been immersed in Western training and willingly accepted its traditions. The West thus managed to impose its culture on Central Europe to a considerable extent.—*Ibid.*, p. 481.
6. Walter Fitzgerald, *The New Europe* (New York, 1946), pp. 65–66.
7. Bernard Newman, *The New Europe* (New York, 1943), p. 230.
8. This significant but frequently neglected aspect of the Rumanian situation is competently analyzed by Walter Fitzgerald in his *The New Europe, An Introduction to Its Political Geography*, pp. 94–95. According to Fitzgerald's summary, "The 'divide' of religion in South-Eastern Europe between Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy (in its various national forms), runs for part of the way along the north-western frontier of Rumania, over against Hungary and Slovakia."
9. *South-Eastern Europe* (London, 1939), p. 6.
10. C. A. Macartney, *The Danubian Basin*, p. 10. The irresistible sweep of outside forces was further facilitated by the unusually large number of *centrifugal* forces operative in this region. Deep-seated religious splits (Catholic versus Orthodox versus Protestant versus Mohammedan), serious ethnic conflicts (Slavs versus Germans versus Magyars versus Rumanians), and divergent political influences (Ottoman versus Habsburg versus Romanov) steadily outweighed the *centripetal* forces. Of the latter, the factors of geography, agrarian economy, and general ethnography are probably the most noteworthy.
11. Hugh Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe between the Wars, 1918–1941* (Cambridge, 1946), p. 418 *et seq.*



12. Robert Machray, *The Struggle for the Danube and the Little Entente, 1929-1938* (London, 1938), p. 18. Machray also quotes the prophetic remark of Foreign Minister Benes (1935): "We are the real center of Europe and if a German *Mitteleuropa* becomes the aim of a Pan-German movement, the Czech nation will be the first to go under." A brief history of the development of Little Entente treaties and negotiations is offered by Helen Fisher in "Cross-Currents in Danubian Europe," *Foreign Policy Reports*, July 15, 1937, pp. 102-103.
13. Karl Haushofer, *Weltpolitik Von Heute* (Berlin, 1934), p. 44 *et seq.*; also Giselher Wirsing, *Zwischeneuropa* (Jena, 1931).
14. DeWitt C. Poole, "Light on Nazi Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, Oct. 1946, p. 152.
15. The Nazi-dictated process of destroying active opposition extended to the intellectual middle classes of Danubian Europe. It was primarily a deep-seated anti-Western feeling, observes *The Economist*, which "led Danubian intellectuals into two mutually hostile camps looking respectively to Berlin and to Moscow." Leaders of Fascist movements came, therefore, largely from the discontented and subservient intelligentsia. Cf. "Intellectuals and the West, Danubia in 1946," *The Economist* (London), Feb. 1, 1947, pp. 182-183.
16. H. Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe between the Wars, 1918-1941*, p. 414.
17. David Mitrany, "The USSR and South-Eastern Europe," *International Affairs*, July 1944, p. 351 *et seq.*
18. The problems of economic and political nationalism are ably discussed in Leo Pasvol'sky's *Economic Nationalism of the Danubian States* (London, 1928), esp. pp. 65-91.
19. Ferdinand Schevill, *The History of the Balkan Peninsula* (New York, 1933, 2nd revised ed.), cf. Chapter XXXVIII, "The Balkan Peoples and the Problem of Balkan Federation," esp. pp. 574-575.
20. Leo Pasvol'sky, *Economic Nationalism of the Danubian States*, p. 548.
21. Alfred Cobban, *National Self-Determination* (London, 1945), p. 35.
22. C. A. Macartney, *National States and National Minorities* (London, 1934), p. 54.
23. *Eastern Europe between the Wars, 1918-1941*, pp. 269-272. The conception of the three dominant types of minority groups, as briefly reviewed here, is part of Chapter VII, "Minorities and Mixed Populations." It is presented here with permission of author and the publisher, the Cambridge University Press.

24. Oskar Halecki, "The Historical Role of Central-Eastern Europe," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, March 1944, p. 17.
25. David Mitrany, *The Effect of the War in Southeastern Europe* (New Haven, 1936), pp. 65-66.
26. The serious dilemma of a Danubian middle class is lucidly analyzed by the Hungarian historian and former Ambassador to the U.S.S.R., Gyula Szekfü, in his recent *Forradalom Után* (After the Revolution), (Budapest, 1948, published in Hungarian). Cf. Chapter V, "Tragedy of the Middle Class," esp. pp. 163-175.
27. Graham Hutton, *Survey after Munich* (Boston, 1939), p. 217.

## II • Postwar Reconstruction and the Peace Treaties

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### WARTIME POSITION OF THE DANUBIAN STATES

The political institutions and development of Danubian states have always been subject to the determining influence of the Great Powers. In view of the rapid multiplication of communist regimes since 1944, it is important to stress the recent increase and present predominance of Soviet influence in this region. Danubian Communism is not a natural, popular, or voluntary force, but an inevitable result of the extension of Soviet power over these countries throughout the critical years 1941-1945. During World War II the principal United Nations reached a common agreement that, as their armies advanced on Germany, the Great Powers would be granted primary military responsibility in the occupied enemy countries. It was natural, furthermore, that a degree of political responsibility *in the entire geographic region* should accompany responsibility in the military sphere. It thus fell to the Soviet Union to guide initial political changes in the satellite states, and simultaneously to exert a direct ideological influence on the neighboring, nonsatellite governments of Eastern Europe. The privileged position of the Soviet Union was originally established by her successful negotiations with the Nazis in 1940, when she obtained a satisfactory stronghold on the lower Danube region and appeared as the immediate neighbor of both Rumania and Bulgaria. This position was further strengthened by the Allied decisions to invade Western Europe rather than the Balkans; to encourage Tito rather than his outspoken political opponent and bitter personal enemy, Mihailovich; to sign detailed armistice terms with the Axis satellites which, *for the duration of hostilities against Germany*, in substance conceded a Soviet

sphere of influence in Danubia;\* and, finally, to order a halt to General George Patton's irresistible sweep a few miles outside Prague, thus allowing the Red Army to enter the capital of Czechoslovakia as triumphant liberators of the country.

Several months before V-E day, with the imminent approach of victory over Germany, it became clear that temporary and informal wartime compromises must give way to more comprehensive and fundamental agreements. The Big Three conference, held at Yalta in the Crimea in February 1945, attempted to formulate a common United Nations policy toward the countries of Eastern Europe. The essence of the problem was to reconcile the interests of the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the United States. It was Moscow's view that Russian interests required the creation of a sphere of influence in Eastern Europe and, therefore, Soviet influence in this region could not be reduced *even after the conclusion of hostilities against Germany*. The Soviet Union would thus succeed to the place held by Germany, as the predominant Great Power in Danubian Europe. The political outlook of the United States and Britain differed markedly from that of Russia. They believed that the stability of Eastern Europe would best be preserved by the establishment of freely elected governments and by the inauguration of an open-door policy as regards information, cultural activities, and commerce. Their policies were founded on the premise that, unless the various countries in Eastern Europe are assured "conditions of internal peace" and the political independence for which they have struggled for so long, the stability of this region could not be maintained.

The Yalta Declaration of February 11, 1945, contained two particularly significant and fateful pledges in connection with Danubian governments.<sup>1</sup> It pledged the assistance of the Great Powers in the formation of democratic provisional regimes established through free elections, and offered "to facilitate where necessary the holding of such elections." The so-called Yalta "formula" concerning the establishment of representative provisional governments in Eastern Europe did not automatically resolve the basic differences separating Western and Soviet policies. Most aspects of Russian foreign policy remained unchanged after Yalta. Energetic Soviet support given to the relatively small Communist parties, the concentration of large numbers of Russian troops in the Danubian countries long after the cessation of hos-

\* For further discussion of satellite peace treaties, cf. pages 57-66 of this chapter.

tilities, and the liquidation of countless prominent anti-Communist leaders as traitors or war criminals led to sharp Anglo-American protests. The diplomatic notes of Great Britain and the United States repeatedly asserted that the restoration of democracy in these countries was being obstructed and the development of moderate democratic groups actively discouraged. Although it was unable to break the East-West deadlock created at Yalta, the Potsdam Conference of July—August 1945 carried United Nations policies toward Eastern Europe a step further. It made arrangements for the discussion of peace treaties with Bulgaria, Hungary, and Rumania, the former Axis satellites, designating the Council of Foreign Ministers as the international body in charge of preparing the treaties. It required the recognition of the three ex-satellite governments prior to the conclusion of peace treaties, and provided for their eventual admission into the United Nations as full-fledged members. In his report to the American people on the Potsdam Conference, President Truman succinctly summarized the wartime problem of Eastern European states and their postwar position among the Great Powers. "At Yalta it was agreed, you will recall, that the three governments would assume a common responsibility in helping to reestablish in the liberated and satellite nations of Europe, governments broadly representative of democratic elements in the population. That responsibility still stands. We all recognize it as a joint responsibility of the three governments." As to the three ex-satellite states, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary, he tersely outlined the guiding principle of a postwar American foreign policy toward Danubia. "These nations are not to be spheres of influence of any one power," he stated, adding that "until these states are reestablished as members of the international family, they are the joint concern of all of us."<sup>2</sup>

### POSTWAR POLITICAL RECONSTRUCTION

The turbulent postwar history of Danubian Europe can readily be compressed into the following sequence:

1944 and 1945—years of liberation from Nazi-German domination;

1946—year of retribution and social upheavals;

1947—year of deepening political cleavages; and

1948—year of crystallizing alliances and appearance of the monolithic state.

In the complex process of political reconstruction, two major stages have emerged so far. The first phase, which had been accomplished by the end of 1946, involved the use of Soviet influence to put friendly

regimes in power and to integrate the foreign policy of the Danubian countries with that of Moscow. The second phase, which has been under way since the latter part of 1946 and early 1947, consisted primarily in a suppression of the opposition, liquidation of its leaders, and consolidation of the new monolithic, one-party state. Its concomitant features brought about a drastic limitation in the freedom of the press and the rights of free speech and assembly. This program is almost completed by now and even in Czechoslovakia, most Westernized of all Danubian countries, liberal-minded Democrats are not particularly hopeful about the future. They would be forced to agree with the boastful remark of the late Soviet leader Andrei Zhdanov that "brilliant victories were achieved by democracy in friendly Czechoslovakia . . . ." The principal item in the second phase, indeed a prerequisite for the successful operation of a long-range communist formula, has been the pressure to gain control of key posts in coalition and national-front governments. One of the most important posts for this purpose is the Ministry of the Interior, which usually controls the police system and several equally far-reaching aspects of national administration. Communist party members have successfully established themselves in this post in all five Danubian countries examined here. Within the temporary framework of coalition governments the ministries of Information, Education, National Defense, and Foreign Affairs are other political prizes much sought after by high Communist leadership.<sup>3</sup> The coalition is carefully maintained, and its principal functions are scrupulously observed until the *former minority* is transformed into a full *ruling majority*. The logical next step in this chain of events is the gradual removal and eventual liquidation of all actual or potential opposition.

The present regimes are usually described as "popular democracies," distinct from the more advanced governmental form of a "Soviet democracy." Danubian governments are determined to bring the *non-party* masses, the politically disinherited majority of the nation, into active participation on each level of national affairs. During the war years this was actually carried out in Yugoslavia and has been attempted more recently, with much less success, in Bulgaria through the Fatherland Front and in Rumania through Groza's Plowmen's Front. The Fronts reflect a complex political, professional, and cultural mass organization under the hegemony and leadership of the Communist party. A minor share in leadership is allowed to a few prominent figures of the prewar period or to an occasional representa-

tive of the wartime governments in exile. One or two rump groups from the *historic* political parties of a previous era are given the chance of temporary survival if they are prepared to cooperate *honestly*, that is to say unconditionally. The only country which had not corresponded completely to the pattern of national fronts was Czechoslovakia. Here the four-party coalition had been developed and maintained for a while on a basis of genuine equality and fairly even representation in top administrative positions, including the much sought-after cabinet posts. The Communist coup of February 1948 upset the Czech equilibrium and established another tightly controlled police state.

The most striking feature of the monolithic postwar state is the elimination of well-established traditional political parties which, in their multiplicity, were so characteristic of the interbellum period in Danubian Europe. Today's leaders have little sympathy for old parties and will cooperate with them only on terms which amount to eventual subordination to Communist dictates. Their general belief is that old parties in the past proved their inability to solve vital social and economic problems, and failed to bring the masses of people into political life. Consequently, they cannot be given another chance in order to attest to their powers of ideological rejuvenation. Although the elimination of several of the prewar parties was justified by their reactionary and inadequate record, the new one-party state does not represent political progress. We are faced here with a process of *regression*, with the spectacle of societies being forced back into a more primitive mode of life. "Nowhere in the world is the disparity so obvious between governors and the governed, between the State machinery and national life."<sup>4</sup> The regressive Eastern European techniques of splitting up and absorbing political parties were most forcibly applied to the socialist and peasant party groups of this area.

### THE SOCIALIST DILEMMA

The striking contrast between Communist hegemony and the steady withdrawal of Socialists from the surface of political life leads to the conclusion that socialism lacks any real roots in Danubian Europe. This is an erroneous assumption. Since the early years of the twentieth century powerful socialist movements existed in the northern parts of the Danube Valley. Those of Czechoslovakia and Hungary were based on a numerous industrial proletariat, and influenced by the steady progress of Austrian social democracy. In Rumania and Bulgaria there were few industrial workers and the bulk of socialist support came

from discontented peasants and small government officials, the leaders chiefly from the revolutionary fringes of the intelligentsia. When the Third International was formed, the newly won prestige of the Bolshevik Revolution deeply influenced various socialist parties, whose members temporarily chose communism rather than social democracy. The conspicuous failures of communism in Hungary and Bavaria soon turned the tide, and by the early nineteen twenties Social Democrats recovered the majority of workers and peasants in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Gradually socialist leaders were admitted to cabinets, became prominent in national parliaments, and published influential newspapers, mostly on the side of the opposition. Although the political atmosphere was unfriendly to the development of socialism into a large-scale mass movement, its roots penetrated deeply and affected the life of the urban population in the more Westernized sections of Danubia.

During the twenty years between two world wars, skilled industrial workers became the backbone of socialist parties in Eastern Europe. They had a tolerable existence and, to a large extent, maintained their political influence at the expense of the unskilled workers and peasants. They regarded the peasantry as a hopelessly reactionary class unsuitable for partnership with the workers. Within their own organizations they put the emphasis not on a "vanguard" of revolutionary leaders, but on an elemental mass movement of educated and organized workers. Socialism penetrated into the trade unions and in the skilled trades which prospered in Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, the most industrialized countries of Southeastern Europe. There were particularly strong, socialist-sponsored trade unions in the metallurgical, textile, and printing industries. These were founded on the model of German trade unions and, because of their articulate and energetic leaders, exerted considerable authority in domestic affairs. The Czech trade unions played an active and constructive part in political life until the destruction of the democratic republic in 1938. In Hungary the skilled workers were sufficiently strong and important to maintain their unions intact until the outbreak of war with Russia.

In Rumania and the Balkans German-Austrian influence was negligible, and trade unions seldom had any connections with the Socialist party. The workers and leftist intellectuals were more exposed to Russian intellectual traditions than to German ideas. Consequently communism became the real left movement and overshadowed social democracy, which was never an important force in the life of these nations. The absence of a large body of skilled workers, the low cul-



tural and economic level of the urban proletariat, and the predominance of the agrarian question made the task of socialist political organization almost impossible. Authoritarian governments were terrified of trade unions as the dangerous harbingers of either socialism or communism, and used every excuse to repress their activities ruthlessly. In Rumania all independent trade unions were officially abolished in 1938 and replaced by Fascist-patterned "guilds," enthusiastically sponsored by King Carol II. In Bulgaria they had no power after the sweeping *coup d'état* of 1934, and were soon replaced by officially organized labor institutions. In Yugoslavia they ceased to have any importance in the mid-thirties, when they were abruptly superseded by official, uniformed "government trade unions" created on the Italian model. The weakness of trade unions and labor unions in the interwar period truthfully reflects the tenuous and superficial hold of socialism on the southern Danubian countries of Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Bulgaria.

The tragic dilemma of socialism emerged in its entirety in the present, postwar period. Today, with the exception of Yugoslavia, all Eastern European governments contain socialist groups, but the socialist movements of the four Danubian countries are split into three distinct sections along the lines of right-wing, Center, and left-wing groupings.\* Until recently Hungarian, Rumanian, and Bulgarian right-wing socialists succeeded in forming a nucleus of open opposition under the leadership of such men as Károly Peyer, C. Titel Petrescu, and Kosta Lulchev. Their iron determination to resist cooperation with the Communists was a significant block on the road leading to the establishment of leftist dictatorships. Several sponsors of this group were imprisoned by the regimes and given long-term sentences, while others were tried *in absentia*. The left wing represents a new extreme in the socialist movement. Whether fearful of political extinction, opportunistic, or driven by ideological convictions, its members advocate unconditional cooperation with the Communists. The best-known protagonists of this extremist trend are probably the former prime minister of Czechoslovakia, Zdenek Fierlinger; one of Hungary's Socialist leaders and present President, Árpád Szakasits; and the governmental social-

\* This distinction should be used carefully and has to be divorced from the customary meaning of "Right" which implies authoritarianism. Authoritarian practices have actually become the chief attributes of the "Left." The basic distinction is between the Socialists who have remained in the evolutionary parliamentary traditions of their party, and those who have decided for one reason or another to join the Communists.

ists of Dimitri Neikov in Bulgaria. Politicians of their complexion usually underwrite any Communist move or decision and, short of joining the party officially, can be counted upon to support it faithfully. In turn, they manage to keep and frequently increase the political power accumulated in the freer atmosphere of preceding years.

The center groups are anxious to pursue independent socialist policies, neither capitulating to the Communist hierarchy nor being drawn into the precarious oppositional groupings of the right wing. They firmly resist Communist pressure for party fusion, which they oppose, despite their fundamental belief in working-class unity, because they know that it would mean immediate conquest of their party machine by the Communist power clique. Members of the Center were largely in control of the Czech and Hungarian Socialist parties, some are to be found in the official Rumanian party, but few of them are even left alive in Bulgaria. Independent Socialists may still be a force in Central Europe, but they are hardly a significant factor in the Balkan countries next to the Soviet Union. Expressed in simplified terms, their dilemma is particularly painful: can they resist the Communists or are they compelled to go along with them on every major issue? If they were able to offer continued and organized resistance, they could form the nucleus of a powerful democratic movement, combining political liberty with social progress. On the other hand, given the present virtually unchecked authority and opportunities of Soviet military power, their activities are easily suppressed by the well-worn devices of packed parliaments and party congresses, expulsion, and, if necessary, arrest of independent-minded leaders. The Hungarian Socialist party, for example, was greatly reduced in influence by the Communist-staged electoral frauds of August 1947, while in Rumania Independent Socialists were recently forced to complete arrangements for fusion with the Communist party. In Bulgaria most of the Socialists were expelled from the government with a mere few surviving in minor political positions. In Czechoslovakia Communist pressures were temporarily frustrated by a short-lived change in Socialist leadership when, at a party congress in Brno in November 1947, pro-Communist Fierlinger was replaced by energetic and capable Bohumil Lausman, who tried to represent the interests of a center group within the party.\* In neigh-

\* Even this Socialist resistance collapsed in the dramatic *Putsch*, engineered by Czech Communists in February 1948. By the middle of 1948 their party officially absorbed the Socialist group, creating a totally misleading new Czechoslovak Communist Party.

boring Poland the Socialists also attempted to stand fast, and when leading members of the Communist party demanded the formation of a single workers' party, the ultimatum was rejected. The Communists then engaged in a series of attacks against the noncooperating members of the Socialist party. Direct and indirect forms of pressure achieved some success and hastened Communist infiltration, but plans for the unification of the two major parties have not been completed as yet. On the whole, moderate Socialists displayed a certain amount of intransigence in the last two countries and delayed by a few months the establishment of a streamlined one-party state on the Yugoslav and Bulgarian pattern.

Independent Socialists had to face the considerable difficulty of not being able to evolve a tight system of centralized control resembling the Cominform of nine European Communist parties. To the extent that most of the world is divided into two camps, the Socialist parties of Eastern and Western Europe find themselves committed to diametrically opposite sides. It is impossible for them to develop an effective international policy encompassing the divergent objectives of socialist groups on both sides of the Iron Curtain: socialism seems to be too loose and indefinite a concept to permit the coordination of political strategy among parties which face different problems in widely diverse social contexts. The Socialist parties of Eastern Europe are unable to produce tactical surprise moves or introduce new and sweeping political strategies. Their fundamental dilemma is greatly enhanced by the Cominform, characteristic product of an approach opposite to the flexible and informal political intercourse of Socialist parties. The basis for such a clearinghouse organization does not exist among Socialist groups, which work in every variety of ideological circumstance. As *The Economist* observed, there is "no unquestioning deference here to a single state party, the deference which kept all Communist groups subservient to Russia in the Comintern."<sup>5</sup> This was essentially the difficulty experienced by the genuinely independent socialist groups of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland when Communist parties first decided to establish the Cominform. The new organization considerably limited their contact with Western parties, narrowing down the domestic choice to a full acceptance of the new Eastern democracy, or to a doubtful form of belligerent opposition. The choice itself was, of course, illusory, for the opposition of socialist groups has been weakened and made ineffective during the past three years; their unity has been disrupted by Communist leaders and Soviet occupation officials who

turned Eastern parties directly against the West. Vigorous opposition was further complicated by certain basic features of the moderate socialist or liberal political credo, which is committed to many values and rejects the claims of any political party reaching out for the whole person and his soul. "Just as it has always been easier for the warrior to die than for the civilian, so it is easier for the Communist to die than for the Socialist or liberal."<sup>6</sup> The Communist is a militant political *activist*, while the Socialist can easily be persuaded to embrace a strategy of more or less passive resistance. Reluctance to engage in effective struggle reached the point where the practical execution of a socialist program in Eastern Europe is at present monopolized by the Communist parties, which are instruments of Russian imperialism. The result is that socialist programs are clumsily bungled, and the ideas of democracy and socialism rapidly discredited. Inertia and passivity inexorably lead to the elimination of all prominent opposition leaders who represent the dwindling ranks of a socialist Center. People of this unfashionable political belief serve, in the characteristic opinion of a Hungarian daily, "as the victims of Anglo-American diplomacy which nurtures with impossible hopes the opposition elements of countries in the Soviet sphere. *Opposition members are thus changed into criminals and conspirators who have to be dealt with as traitors, threatening the very existence of the new democracies.*"<sup>\*7</sup>

#### THE PROBLEM OF PEASANT PARTIES

The political assimilation of Danubian Europe into the U.S.S.R. is considerably facilitated by the weakness of native liberal peasant movements. The majority of the peasantry has never been adequately represented by the parties of either Left or Right, which seldom showed genuine interest in the helpless and leaderless masses. With limited education and social experience the Eastern European peasant was not able to assert himself politically; opposed to the camp of Machiavellian theorists and practitioners, the peasantry was a novice in the political arena, without training, without a concise program, and accustomed for centuries to the feudal yoke. Although individual peasant movements varied according to the political climate and special circumstances of particular regions, few of them ever appeared in the form of well-organized and carefully integrated political parties. The most vigorous and significant among them aimed at the transformation of the state in the interests of the peasant class, and demanded social re-

\* Italics mine.

forms, the semblance of political democracy, and definite economic measures to help the peasants. They had fairly precise programs, high international ideals, and accomplished a few concrete reforms. Of the most active Eastern European peasant groups, the Croat and Polish parties, the Czech and Bulgarian Agrarians, and the Rumanian National Peasants strove for radical land redistribution and for the improvement of public health.

In prewar Danubia several peasant-sponsored land reforms were carried out successfully. There was a general feeling among educated middle-class people that as the peasantry had borne the brunt of World War I, and had proved itself in a great crisis to be the backbone of the nation, it deserved to be given its share of the landed wealth. The first country to act was Rumania. Under peasant leadership the Rumanian Parliament voted in 1918 a radical land reform which was extended to both old and new provinces of the country. By 1930 over 4,000,000 hectares of cultivable land had been distributed to small holders or landless peasant laborers. In Czechoslovakia the land reform distributed among the Czech and Slovak peasants the estates of the big German and Hungarian landlords, while in Yugoslavia members of the Hungarian, Croatian, and Moslem nobility were deprived of their large landholdings. Hungary followed suit with the land reform of 1920. This ambitious scheme, sponsored by a minister of agriculture of peasant origin, could have easily changed the country's character from a stronghold of big landowners to one of predominantly small holdings. Unhappily, subsequent governments lost interest in the project, and between 1921 and 1938 not more than 270,000 hectares of the big estates were distributed to the peasants. Nevertheless, this legislative effort marked the appearance of a new peasant party in Hungary.

There is no doubt that in the countries of the Danube Valley far too little attention has been paid to public health. Lack of interest in the medical profession and governmental indifference have been the major handicapping factors responsible for generally low health and living standards. Yet under the instigation of native peasant groups considerable progress has been achieved in the last twenty-five years. Public health workers have engaged in surveying the needs of the population, informing and educating the agricultural classes, and arousing them from their perennial indifference. Pioneers of this selfless and unsparing work have asserted themselves in each of the Danubian countries, frequently appearing in the guise of hard-working political pressure groups. The "village explorers" of Hungary represented an organiza-

tion of this type. Its members were young university graduates, interested students of rural sociology who energetically militated for long-delayed and desperately needed reform measures in the fields of peasant housing, food supply and diet, medical service, and protective employment regulations. In the mid-nineteen thirties they made excellent use of an effective weapon, the publication of detailed studies in a series of stirring books depicting the miserable living conditions of millions of agricultural workers and tenant farmers in Danubia. They called for immediate social legislation, along with improved long-range political representation for the submerged peasant groups of rural Hungary. Special mention should be made of the great Yugoslav Dr. Andrija Štampar, recognized as one of the leading experts in public health, who in a few years obtained brilliant results in his country. As Hugh Seton-Watson observes, the achievements of medical public health experts and students of sociology or government present a promising beginning. Progress along these lines will be limited by necessity unless radical economic and educational reforms are carried out in each of the agrarian countries of Eastern Europe.<sup>8</sup>

A sharp contrast is noticeable between these active and resourceful groups and such fully urbanized movements as the Smallholders' party of Hungary. The latter have seldom engaged in the defense of the depressed elements of their peasantry. On the contrary, by their lack of interest and political opportunism they gradually weakened the foundations of the class they were supposed to protect. They were composed of extreme conservatives who upheld primarily the interests of a wealthier kulak group. This category was particularly well represented in Rumania and Hungary, where the so-called peasant parties were organized and managed by typical townsmen, such as Juliu Maniu or Tibor Eckhardt. In Danubian Europe these "pseudo-peasant" urban movements became increasingly subservient to reactionary tendencies and disturbing totalitarian pressures. In the period before World War II military dictatorships gave them the deathblow, while in the present era aggressive Communist tactics succeeded in reducing their political effectiveness. To a surprising extent they were exposed to Communist accusations of harboring reactionaries. Collaborationist, fascist elements have actually taken refuge in the peasant parties; in Slovakia, for example, the Democratic party accepted into its ranks several followers of the native fascist leader Hlinka; in Rumania Maniu's Peasant party was dangerously infiltrated by former adherents of the Iron Guard; and in Croatia a number of Nazi-minded Ustashis found a

way into Machek's party. Consequently, the peasant parties were faced with the unpleasant situation of offering asylum to politically undesirable groups while misrepresenting the interests of their own class. Slowly the nature of these postwar movements changed and the political coloring altered until their ranks are filled not only by peasants but, more than even before the war, by the urban bourgeoisie, the bureaucracy, and people of an extreme rightist, nationalist background.<sup>9</sup>

The disintegration of historic peasant parties was a lengthy and complicated process. At first the Communists fostered splits within the parties, forcing most of the old-line peasant leaders into opposition. Increasingly worried about potential peasant opposition, the Communist bloc then switched over to direct attack. In at least three of the Danubian countries identical methods of offensive strategy were adopted. The same charges of conspiracy, preparation for a *coup d'état*, treason, and espionage were leveled against the more prominent peasant opponents. The attacks were waged simultaneously, its successive phases were carefully synchronized, and the entire drive was climaxed in Bulgaria and Rumania when the peasant parties were officially dissolved, their parliamentary representation was liquidated, and their leaders were either executed or given long-term prison sentences. The offensive somewhat lagged behind in Hungary, where a thoroughly emasculated Smallholders' party is formally still in the government bloc, on a tenuous and temporary basis.

### A PEASANT UNION IN EXILE

An exiled external pressure group has recently engaged in the restoration of Eastern European peasant forces to their former functions and significance. The International Peasant Union now includes several leading Danubian officials who escaped from their Communist-dominated countries and organized a new "democratic front." The purpose of their movement seems to be an attack against the Cominform and all aspects of Communist rule in Central and Eastern Europe. Organizers of the union in exile, with headquarters in Washington, eventually hope to regain their official posts and political influence at home, restoring simultaneously their parties to a decisive balance-of-power position in internal affairs. More prominent members of the group include Dr. G. M. Dimitrov, former leader of the Bulgarian Agrarian party, Ferenc Nagy, former premier of Hungary, Dr. Machek and Milan Gavrilovic of the Yugoslav Peasant party, and several rep-

representatives of the dissolved Rumanian Peasant party. In 1948 the group was joined by the former vice premier and Peasant leader of Poland, Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, who miraculously escaped personal persecution at home.

The complex hierarchy and membership of the International Peasant Union clearly indicates that present-day political emigration from Eastern Europe is far from being unified and integrated. There are innumerable political colors and shadows, beginning with the extreme right and finishing with socialists, liberals, and democrats. The new political migration is also divided into numerous national groups which are slowly crystallizing around the peasant movement and its new center in Washington. This "Green International" now embraces the liberal and democratic elements of Danubian Europe, exiled statesmen who have opposed totalitarianism and terror at home. The Peasant Union dates back to the early nineteen twenties, when the well-known Bulgarian peasant leader, Alexander Stambolisky, tried to organize the peasantry of Eastern Europe into an international movement. Although Stambolisky's assassination prevented an early realization of the project, Dr. Dimitrov, himself a pupil and follower of the great peasant leader, helped to organize the new Green International and developed its present-day organization. Among members of the Union the feeling is general that a close cooperation of peasants and workers in Danubian Europe is indispensable in stabilizing a democratic political system. Leaders of the group have not forgotten the lessons taught by their own tumultuous national history. They recall that the present totalitarian system is not the first one in the Danube Valley, which has frequently suffered from native brands of semimilitary dictatorships. They are afraid that in case of a sudden and violent change of political conditions in Eastern Europe the rightist military and reactionary sympathizers, now also in exile, would impose a new semifascist rule in place of the present monolithic police state of postwar Communist parties.

The long-range effectiveness of this organization is questionable, for no diplomatic action can create democracy where it has never been historically established. As a voice of protest against the relentless process of *Gleichschaltung*, the Union is certainly noteworthy. In a formal appeal to the governments of the United States, Great Britain, and France the Union clearly stated its major objectives. "Unilateral action on the part of the Soviet Union has resulted in the destruction of the international agreements of Yalta, Potsdam and Moscow. It is high



time for the democratic powers to admit openly this state of affairs and take the necessary steps to prevent its adverse consequences."<sup>10</sup> The term "necessary steps" is an ambiguous statement in itself. For purposes of clarification, leaders of the group declared that they meant the establishment of a democratic *international* front facing and challenging the Soviet-controlled *national* fronts of Eastern Europe. In spite of these opposition efforts, it is difficult to visualize at present what political changes and internal reforms could be brought about in Danubia by the distant and limited activities of this nucleus in exile. An additional handicap is the absence of a common ideological denominator among members of the new multinational union. Their *peasant* background is actually a convenient cloak covering individual differences in the appraisal of social or economic reform measures needed in their native countries. A majority of the membership seems to agree that small landownership and cooperatives form the basis of the future agrarian structure in Eastern Europe and that a mixed economic system is both desirable and necessary. The latter would embrace public as well as private ownership, preserving private enterprise in a good many fields. Beyond these fundamental beliefs there is a variety of opinions and a divergence in prejudice. To outside observers the International Peasant Union often appears as an ephemeral alliance with essentially negative characteristics; it is based on a jointly shared exile and on the fervent desire to regain lost political power.

### ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION

The conflict which currently divides Eastern and Western Europe is the inevitable result of two opposing political and economic systems. The most acute economic problems of Danubian Europe are threefold: How can the defeated countries meet the tremendous reparations burden imposed by the peace treaties? How can this region be compensated for the loss of valuable aid under the Marshall Plan, which its governments officially renounced? How can the ingrained practices of a capitalist tradition be reconciled with the collectivist ideas of the present period? Political pressures are raising substantial barriers to economic recovery and are greatly hampering the revival of an East-West trade. Badly needed loans are delayed while their political effects are weighed; traffic on the Danube is halted while the complex principles of freedom of navigation are internationally clarified; artificial trade frontiers are erected in Germany and Austria to conform to the new zones of military and political influence; countries are isolated and

frequently punished for the political complexion of their governments. The deepening split between East and West has critically reduced the area of continental European trade, thus eliminating the most fundamental step in the process of recovery itself.

In the past the sound economic pattern of East-West trade has been motivated by the incontrovertible fact that Western Europe is a food deficit area, while Rumania, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Poland are normally food surplus regions. In addition the East has vast resources of timber, certain key minerals, petroleum, and many by-products of a peasant economy which have accounted for a considerable share of the intracontinental trading system. The volume of such commerce is at present much below the prewar average.

For the most part, the low level of East-West trade is due to the same causes that explain the small volume of trade among the Western countries themselves: devastation during the war, disorganization, shortages, inconvertible currencies, transportation difficulties, and large domestic demand. Danubian agriculture was particularly hard hit during the war and has recovered slowly, partly because of a prolonged drought in 1945-1946 and partly because of lack of fertilizer and farm machinery. Drastic and often confusing land reforms also retarded the recovery of production and thus automatically limited the surpluses available for export. Obviously, Eastern Europe cannot supply during the next few years much of the equipment, food, cotton, petroleum, and other industrial materials so badly needed in Western Europe. The only exception was Czechoslovakia, which prior to February 1948 succeeded in maintaining a moderately favorable trade balance with the West.\*

These limited trade connections have not altered the nature of the basic problem. How can the countries of Eastern Europe, forced into a postwar economic straitjacket, survive and develop without the continued assistance of Western Europe? How can they industrialize without American capital and at the same time end inflation left behind by the war economy, stop the dangerous upward spiral of prices and wages, and fulfill the traditional Communist promise to raise the workers' standard of living? This basic dilemma is made considerably worse by the fact that the Soviet Union has been exporting inflation to this area through her indiscriminate policy of taking reparations goods

\* This unusual postwar situation was considerably changed by the provisions of the commercial pact between Czechoslovakia and the U.S.S.R. Since about January 1948 almost the entire output of Czech machinery and other reconstruction items have been sold to the Soviet Union.

wholesale out of the Hungarian, Bulgarian, and Rumanian economies.

A ready solution for these complex economic ills would have been the acceptance of the Marshall Plan by the governments of Danubian Europe. It is a well-known fact, however, that shortly after its first formulation in the summer of 1947, the Marshall program was rejected by every country in the Soviet sphere of influence. Instead of joining Western Europe in the American aid-plan, these governments developed their own pattern of economic organization for the entire Soviet-dominated region. The blueprint, frequently labeled the new *Molotov Plan* for Eastern Europe, appears to center around three major objectives: (1) the rapid reconstruction of Russian economy with the aid of her immediate neighbors; (2) regional self-sufficiency through industrialization of Danubian countries and particularly through a fuller and increased use of the industrial potential of Czechoslovakia and Poland, key countries of the new Soviet sphere; and (3) the eventual creation of a vast economic unit which will strive to equal or exceed the power of the United States, or at least that of Western Europe. The Molotov Plan would thus call for the establishment of a Balkan-Danubian economic system in which Russian and Bohemian industry ought to provide a badly needed and useful balance to the agrarian economy of the other countries. Czechoslovakia's recent trade agreements form part of a series concluded among the Eastern countries, the U.S.S.R., and the Soviet zone of Germany. More ambitious steps have also been foreshadowed. A customs union was planned between Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Rumania, automatically including Albania, which has been virtually a province of Yugoslavia in economic matters since their 1946 treaty of economic union. These arrangements comprised the basis of the Molotov Plan for intensifying economic relations among Eastern European countries and coordinating their industrial development. Since the first announcement of the Marshall Plan the tempo has been speeded up considerably. But only the label and the spirit of aggressiveness are new features. Industrialization and increased trade among themselves were already parts of the economic plans of all Danubian countries before the Marshall Plan was launched.<sup>11</sup>

#### THE INDUSTRIALIZATION OF EASTERN EUROPE

There is no more basic objective in Soviet economic policy than forced industrialization. This seems to be a vital matter, for the entire Moscow-dominated economic area must be made independent of Western influences, American loans, and products of the Ruhr heavy

industry. To buy the necessary capital equipment, exports must be artificially expanded and the home market neglected. The home markets of the countries in the Molotov Plan, already depleted through the concentration of effort on producing capital equipment, actually bear the burden and sacrifice in fostering the long-range projects for industrialization. Yet Communist policy has not wavered in its determination that nothing must interfere with this line of action. Although the area is predominantly agricultural, it has an industrial nucleus in Silesia and in Bohemia-Moravia. These heartland regions are expected to provide the industrial spark, while other countries will be drawn upon mainly for basic raw materials. Yugoslavia is rich in metal ores, copper, bauxite, lead, zinc, and manganese; Rumania can add three products of great potential value: oil, timber, foodstuffs; and Poland has an excess of coal in Silesia. The key to this plan of regional recovery is steel, which seems to be the major gap in the production blueprint. Only Czechoslovakia and Poland produce it in significant quantities, and even they make less than would cover their own needs. Both must import iron ore. Rumania produces some coal, and Yugoslavia actually mines six million tons of coal a year, but both of them need large amounts of mining machinery if they are to achieve even the most modest and short-term production targets. Altogether only three to four million tons of steel are now being produced in all of Eastern Europe, roughly one twentieth of America's annual output.

In this light the announcement of a partial integration of Czech and Polish industries gains special significance. The first phase of the project calls for building a jointly owned electric power plant on Polish soil, operated with Polish coal and Czech machinery, and furnishing power to both countries. The plant is a forerunner of several such power stations established in the two countries. Furthermore, in an effort to combat the serious shortage of capital goods, a Polish-Czech standardization committee has decided upon the manufacture of uniform electric appliances, machinery, and parts for both economies.<sup>12</sup> Several other recent treaties have called for close economic relations with a view to increasing industrial production. In spite of the largely noncomplementary nature of their economies, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria agreed in 1947 to assist each other in industrial developments, electrification, mining, and agriculture.\* Rumania, a strategically placed anchor state in the

\* For full details of the Yugoslav-Bulgarian treaty of friendship, cf. Chapter VIII, under heading "Other Regional Understandings and Movements for Balkan Unity."

Molotov Plan, is now planning to rebuild her shattered economy by means of detailed trade pacts with every one of the neighboring "new democracies." Poland supplies coal, coke, and steel plates in exchange for Rumanian oil, while Czechoslovakia and Hungary give machinery for agricultural and forest products.

### A NETWORK OF TRADE AGREEMENTS

The pattern of commercial agreements is still in a very fluid state and far from uniform throughout Molotov Europe. Soviet domination is most marked in the ex-enemy countries of Hungary, Bulgaria, and Rumania, and is exercised primarily through joint economic collaboration agreements. These provide for a 50 per cent participation by the Soviet Union in various branches of the economic life of these nations. Joint companies are established between the Soviet Union and individual countries to develop certain key economic resources. The first agreements of this type were concluded with Rumania in May 1945, and soon joint companies were created for oil production, navigation, civil aviation, and banking.<sup>13</sup> The companies themselves were claimed by the Soviet Union as part of reparations payments; actually, however, both capital and managerial responsibilities were evenly divided between the appropriate Soviet *state* enterprises and *private* Rumanian interests. The joint companies quickly achieved a monopolistic position in the internal life of Rumania, just as the "mixed" Russo-Hungarian companies soon dominated Hungary's more important economic activities. Similar agreements negotiated with Bulgaria between March 1945 and April 1946 involved about half of Bulgaria's foreign trade volume and brought all important mining enterprises under joint company control. These significant arrangements are designed to bring about complete Russian economic domination and have already resulted in a considerable expansion of the Soviet Union's share in the foreign trade of her Eastern European neighbors. The latest available figures, for the year 1946, show the following trade picture:<sup>14</sup>

|            | <i>Exports to U.S.S.R.</i> | <i>Imports from U.S.S.R.</i> |
|------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
|            | %                          | %                            |
| Hungary    | 45 <sup>a</sup>            | 49                           |
| Rumania    | 66                         | 82                           |
| Poland     | 51                         | 74                           |
| Yugoslavia | 74                         | 52                           |
| Bulgaria   | 89                         | 87                           |

<sup>a</sup> All figures are based on the percentage of the total value of exports and imports.

These totals obviously leave little trade for other countries and practically no incentive to go beyond the Molotov sphere for additional foreign commerce connections. All bilateral agreements between the Soviet Union and Danubian states are expressed in dollars, although usually no money changes hands; products are given a dollar value and exchanged on that basis. This bargaining procedure has given rise to a great deal of negotiation, with heated arguments centering around the value assigned to individual barter items. The United States government objected as early as July 1945 to the Soviet, Hungarian, and Rumanian governments concerning the economic collaboration agreements. There were, however, no subsequent changes in the pattern, and the Soviet government in particular refused to accede to a Western conception of equality in trade agreements.

There is a modest nucleus of trade pacts between the countries of Eastern and Western Europe, although in most cases the vast amount of labor spent in reaching accords has not resulted in much trade. After long negotiations, Britain and Poland concluded an agreement in June 1947; Polish purchases in Britain were planned to the equivalent of 140 million dollars over a period of three years. Britain agreed to buy 92 million dollars worth of food and chemical products and 48 million dollars worth of coal. The over-all figures of the trade agreement, except those for coal, are only a fraction of what they might have been under normal trading conditions. Similar East-West accords have been negotiated between Britain and Czechoslovakia and Britain and Hungary. Belgium, Sweden, Switzerland, and several of the Danubian countries have also concluded minor trade agreements.

### NATIONALIZATION OF INDUSTRIES

Nationalization, or at least the state direction of basic industries, is directly subordinated to the avowed goal of regional industrialization. Although the economic revolution of Communist-dominated governments is not yet completed, the general pattern of a *mixed economy* has already emerged. The latter consists of three sectors, nationalized, cooperative, and private, each an integral part of the social structure of the country and frequently raised to the level of a constitutional principle. The Yugoslav constitution of 1946 has officially proclaimed the three types of ownership of the means of production, and other Danubian countries may be expected to follow.<sup>15</sup> The new economic order will nationalize basic industries and large financial establishments; it will encourage cooperatives and unions of cooperatives in certain

fields of production, such as food industries and agricultural enterprises; and it will tolerate private ownership and initiative, especially in medium and small industry. Private ownership will always be closely subjected to the over-all and long-range economic plans of the state. Finally, foreign trade and internal wholesale trade will be directly controlled by government agencies, or even formally nationalized. The new order has crystallized to the extent that the state has taken over the "commanding heights" of economy; the key branches of industry and the leading financial institutions have been nationalized in all countries in the Soviet orbit. Cooperatives have also multiplied rapidly and today play a significant role in the economies of Yugoslavia and Hungary. Through outright nationalization and varying degrees of state control the Soviet Union undoubtedly intends to monopolize the economy of this area, allowing intercourse with the West only through a few centralized regional agencies. The short-term economic picture is vastly different. The tremendous tasks of postwar reconstruction have forced the Soviet government to compromises of all types. It had to allow Eastern European governments to trade with the West and was consistently compelled to make a good showing with supplies of food and raw materials to such less amenable allies as Poland and Czechoslovakia. These concessions were granted in an effort to promote the eventual success of an all-Eastern European Molotov Plan. Because of the considerable differential in the treatment of individual governments, it is too early to visualize the outlines of a single, exclusive, and uniform economic bloc in Danubian Europe.<sup>16</sup> It is also apparent, however, that certain parallel lines of economic development have asserted themselves in this area and that an increasingly keen and bitter intersectional competition now separates the "Marshall nations" of the West from the "Molotov countries" of the East.

#### PEACE TREATIES FOR AXIS SATELLITES

World War II plunged the nations of Danubian Europe into a turmoil of conflicting interests and inflamed ideologies. It provoked unexpected political shifts, obliged countries to change camps and frequently to reverse alliances against their will. The European peace settlements of 1919 concentrated all effort upon the punishment of the defeated enemy and the erection of a world organization. In so doing they failed to provide for the economic, political, and military survival of the nations of Southeastern Europe. In the satellite peace treaties of 1946 some attention was paid to these forces whose daily interplay di-

rectly affects the international political picture. The opinion voiced by Secretary of State George C. Marshall, in March 1947, that the treaties, while unsatisfactory from some points of view, are nevertheless as good as the United States can hope to obtain, is generally acceptable. The advantages of the new peace settlements were seen to be threefold: ratification was to pave the way for the withdrawal of occupation troops from the former satellite states; the agreements might create a middle-of-the-road element of political stability, encouraging progress along the road to peace; and the former enemy states would become eligible for admission to the United Nations and would obtain the right of appeal to the international organization for the settlement of future problems affecting their peace and security.<sup>17</sup>

The process of peacemaking saw the Danubian states divided in two groups. Two countries emerged on the victorious side after their liberation from German occupation, and were given a voice in drawing up the peace treaties. They were Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, which had resisted the Nazis and officially joined the Allies. On the other hand, the former Axis satellite states of Rumania, Hungary, and Bulgaria suffered serious defeat in the war. They now appeared at the peace conferences as ex-enemies who would have to face the consequences of their recent military moves and political attitudes.

The Paris Peace Conference, meeting from April to July 1946, succeeded in reaching accord on most important issues concerning the Danubian countries. The conference also gave the smaller Allied states and Axis satellites an opportunity to obtain full discussion of many controversial aspects of the proposed peace treaties. Peacemaking proved arduous and complicated because of the sharply opposed viewpoints of the United States and the Soviet Union. The Western Powers insisted that the Soviet Union maintain an open-door policy in Eastern Europe; on the other hand, Russia viewed the peace settlements with Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria as her own exclusive concern. The final decisions formulated at Paris and subsequent conference meetings reflect the essential minimum compromises reached between East and West.

#### RATIFICATION OF THE TREATIES

The most important political principle involved in the ratification of peace treaties was the agreement that all Allied occupying forces would be withdrawn shortly after ratification itself. Specifically, Soviet troops of occupation were to leave Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria



within ninety days. The Soviet Union agreed to recall its troops from all three Eastern European satellites, subject to leaving some of its troops in Hungary and Rumania to safeguard communications with the Russian zone of Germany and Austria. The number of troops required to maintain these lines of communication was left to the discretion of the Soviet Union. The treaties also provided for the dissolution of Allied Control Commissions in Hungary and Rumania as soon as the peace settlements were ratified.

Although signed in February 1947, the treaties were not ratified for several months, mostly because of strong Soviet reluctance. Suddenly, in midsummer of 1947, the three small states followed the example of Finland, and ratified their peace treaties: Hungary on June 25, Rumania on August 23, and Bulgaria on August 24. First of the Big Three, Britain ratified the satellite treaties on April 29, and the United States on June 15, 1947. As a result of strong British and American insistence in Moscow, the Supreme Soviet finally authorized the Soviet government to effect ratification on August 29, 1947. Simultaneously the last two Allied Control Commissions of Danubian Europe, largely directed and managed by their Russian members, were dissolved both in Budapest and in Bucharest. This limited Soviet withdrawal raised another fundamental problem for Western diplomacy, namely the completion of a peace treaty with Austria at an early date. The Soviet Union has a wedge running from the Black Sea to Vienna guarded by her key military government officials and troops, which have the right to protect the extended lines of communication leading to Austria.\* For several months the Soviet government kept 130,000 troops in Rumania to protect these "lines of communication." The treaty with Austria will be of great political import in Central Europe as it will provide for occupation withdrawal in ninety days. There will be no legal basis then for keeping a military spearhead in the center of Europe.

#### ECONOMIC CLAUSES OF THE PEACE TREATIES

Structurally the economic clauses of the three satellite treaties are similar in many parts. The reparations provisions represent an adoption of the Russian terms as set forth in the armistice agreements drawn up by Moscow during 1944 and 1945. Western views were hardly

\* The presence of these officials and military personnel had a decisive influence in the shaping of internal political developments long after the formal dissolution of the respective ACC's. Soviet generals were particularly vocal in Budapest and Sofia; see the chapters on Hungary and Bulgaria.

taken into consideration throughout these negotiations. From the Soviet point of view a reconciliation had to be found between the desire not to cripple economically countries which have now become her satellites, and the claim of compensation for damages inflicted in World War II. The Soviet aspect was clearly expressed by Andrei Vyshinski in connection with Hungarian reparations: "The Soviet Union had a right to demand reparation for damage inflicted by the Hungarians to Soviet property . . . . But they must be just; the economic clauses must be based on economic reality."<sup>18</sup> Although the Western delegations to the peace conference took a stern view of the war guilt of these satellite nations, they were also anxious to prevent their complete absorption into the Soviet economic sphere. Protracted and weary peace negotiations in 1946 and 1947 made it certain that any modification in Russian reparations policies would be carried out unilaterally by the Soviet Union, rather than as a result of Western diplomatic representations. Eventually Rumania and Hungary were each required to pay \$300,000,000 worth of commodities at 1938 prices over a period of eight years and mainly out of current production, while Bulgarian reparations were fixed at \$70,000,000. Russia is the sole recipient of the reparations from Rumania; Hungary pays the Soviet \$200,000,000 and the rest is subdivided between payments to Yugoslavia (\$70,000,000) and to Czechoslovakia (\$30,000,000).<sup>19</sup> Decision on the Bulgarian reparations was deferred several times and an American proposal for \$100,000,000 to be equally divided between Greece and Yugoslavia was rejected. The peace conference finally agreed to a compromise proposal that Bulgaria pay Greece \$45,000,000, and a considerably reduced \$25,000,000 to the friendly government of Yugoslavia. On the whole, the Soviet Union emerged as the major beneficiary of the reparations arrangements, particularly as its government was not required to consult or inform the other Allied Powers concerning any phase of the collection program. The Soviet Union not only became the largest mortgage holder in the Hungarian and Rumanian economy, but also acquired a determining influence in the planning of production. Control through reparations means that the entire production scheme of these Danubian industries has come to depend largely on the requirements of the powers who collect the reparations. Raw materials are frequently delivered by the Soviet Union itself; cotton is given the small textile industry of Hungary, which then delivers the finished goods to the U.S.S.R. More often, however, these raw materials are provided by other Eastern European countries closely connected with

the Soviet Union. Supplies from Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia eventually reach Rumania and Hungary, where they are transformed into the required reparations goods. This type of transaction explains why Czechoslovakia has such a large share in Hungary's foreign trade, in spite of the continuing political tension between the two countries. In connection with reparations the question of compensation for Allied property holders was brought up. Restitution of Allied property removed from Allied territory by any of the Axis powers was imposed on the three defeated countries. Allied property, rights, and interests situated in the territory of an ex-satellite are to be restored and payments of compensation are to be made in local currency.\*

#### CONTROL OF THE DANUBE RIVER

The Danube is the longest European waterway and a vital link in the trade relations of Southeastern Europe. Recent international discussions concerning the Danube have centered around two conflicting principles: free and equal treatment for all nations, and the more exclusive assertion that control of the Danube should be confined to riparian states alone. The latter view was forcefully championed by the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia, which would obviously share in any riparian control scheme while the United States, Great Britain, and France would definitely be excluded. The American and British governments therefore insisted on the inclusion in the treaties with Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria of a general provision for free navigation. The Western Powers hoped to enable these three key Danubian states to keep their lines of communication open toward them as well as toward the Soviet Union. This policy was regarded by the Soviet representatives as an unwarranted intervention in the affairs of Eastern Europe.

The conflict of interests is not a new development in the life of this river valley, for the Danube has been under international control since 1856. In that year the Treaty of Paris laid down the significant principle that navigation of the river should be entirely free, and that each riparian state should be responsible for the works necessary to maintain the river in navigable order. From 1856 to 1919 the Danube was controlled by two international authorities. A European Commission of

\* Although neither the foreign ministers nor the Paris Peace Conference could agree on the many technical details involved in compensation payments, the Peace Conference unequivocally rejected a British proposal substituting foreign currency as a means of delivering such payments.

the Danube, a fully independent body including nonriparians, was given important rights to safeguard equal access to all nations whether or not they were represented on the international body of administration. In addition, a Danube River Commission was established to regulate navigation on the river above its mouth. The latter contained delegates from Yugoslavia and Rumania, and thus at least a sector of regional interests was represented on the commission. During World War I the work of these commissions was interrupted when Germany gained temporary control over the river. In the interbellum period a new international Statute of the Danube, signed in Paris in July 1921, regulated the intricate problem of river control. By terms of the statute, navigation on the river system was declared to be unrestricted and open to all nations from the city of Ulm on the upper Danube to the Black Sea. Unhappily, these satisfactory arrangements gradually broke down in the nineteen thirties. The chief difficulties were the failure of technical experts to agree on the required improvements, lack of funds hampering the execution of various projects, and increasing hostility from the Rumanian government. By 1940 the rapid extension of German influence in Southeastern Europe obscured all other developments in the struggle for the Danube. Germany had occupied Austria and Czechoslovakia, declared the International Commission dissolved, and took over control of the river. The strategic position of the Third Reich was abruptly altered in 1944 when the Rumanian armistice awarded the province of Bessarabia to the Soviet Union and thus reaffirmed a generally recognized Russian stand on the Danube.<sup>20</sup>

Set against this diplomatic background, the Paris Peace Conference of 1946 had to face steady Russian opposition arguing that trade and navigation guarantees were not properly part of the peace treaties. The conference nevertheless succeeded in voting for a general restatement of the principles of free navigation and their inclusion in the satellite peace treaties. The three Balkan treaties accordingly stress the clause that "navigation on the Danube shall be free and open for the nationals, vessels of commerce and goods of all States on the footing of equality, with regard to port and navigation charges and conditions for merchant shipping." Further implementation of this general principle was left to a later conference and a separate convention. In the latter part of 1946 the United States government made an important conciliatory gesture on the Danube issue. It suddenly released 600 vital riverboats which were owned by Yugoslavia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria, and over which there has been considerable controversy.

The American move was regarded as a good bartering point to win concessions from the Soviet Union concerning the Danube issue. The Council of Foreign Ministers reached a decision on December 12, 1946, agreeing to arrange a meeting in which the United States, Britain, the Soviet Union, and France, as well as the Danubian states, were to be called upon to work out a new basis for the control of the Danube. Because of the constant deterioration of Soviet-American relations no conference was held in 1947, and no convention signed concerning the principal administrative details of an international regime. Unfortunately all discussions on the future of the river are influenced by regional power alignments, national fears, and ulterior motivations. Yet the importance of the area and its troubled life in the recent past mark this problem as one on which international collaboration is essential.

The perennial issue of regulating, and possibly internationalizing, Danube traffic emerged again in 1948. A conference of the Big Four and the Danubian nations was to be summoned on March 15, 1948, to work out arrangements for free Danubian traffic. This preliminary conference never met, primarily because the Soviet Union and the West disagreed on inviting Austria. Russia stated that Austria could not participate because the Austrian treaty had not been drafted. The Western Powers argued that Austria should participate as the Danube was vital to her economy. In April 1948 the United States suggested a compromise solution. It proposed to Britain, France, and Russia that the Danubian Conference open on July 30 in Belgrade, with Austria attending as a "consultant" without a vote. The three governments accepted the proposal and although Yugoslavia first claimed that Belgrade lacked facilities for an international conference, the meetings were finally arranged for the midsummer of 1948. This Danubian Conference was the first international meeting since the war in which the Soviet Union had a majority of the votes (seven) to the West's three. The countries represented were the strictly Danubian states: the Soviet Union, the Ukraine, Rumania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Hungary; and the United States, Britain, and France in their capacities as members of the Council of Foreign Ministers. While the Soviet Union adhered to her earlier attitude opposing Austria's participation in the conference talks, she agreed that Austria be invited in a consultative capacity.

Delegates to the Danube Conference discussed both a Soviet and an American draft convention. The Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellites considered the 1921 Statute of the Danube, declaring

navigation on the river unrestricted and open to all nations, null and void. They attacked it as a weapon of political penetration and economic exploitation in the hands of the "Versailles powers," and stressed the slogan of "Danube for the Danubians." The Soviet draft was based on the principle of control by riparian nations, excluding all non-Southeastern European countries from river navigation. It was, in fact, a type of regional pact between the seven Danube states, guaranteeing complete control of four fifths of the Danube to countries in the Russian orbit. The American draft, on the other hand, closely followed the Statute of 1921 and centered around the cardinal principle of an internationalized Danube River, free and open to all states. The final vote was along the familiar East-West line of division, and with a score of seven to three the Soviet convention was adopted. In spite of the repeated protests of Western delegates, who refused to be bound by the Belgrade decision, the Soviet Union and its satellites achieved control of the Danube. By the end of 1948 only about 200 miles of navigable river—the section between Ulm, Germany, and Linz, Austria—were left open to Western traffic.

#### POLITICAL CLAUSES

The territorial settlements following World War II, and incorporated in the new peace treaties of Eastern European satellites, were determined almost exclusively by the Soviet Union. The Council of Foreign Ministers and the Paris Peace Conference were able to modify only minor and nonessential features of these territorial arrangements.\* The three Danubian treaties do not engage in the construction of a new state system and avoid redrawing the map to the extent that was done at Versailles. Hungary is more directly affected by the geographic clauses than either Rumania or Bulgaria. The treaty signed by Hungarian delegates in February 1947 officially acknowledged the crushing military and diplomatic defeats the country had suffered in World War II. As Hungary's war record and uncertain political orientation had gained for her a lesser degree of confidence than had been won by the other two satellites, she emerged considerably weakened.

Hungary was confined to her 1938 boundaries with a modification in favor of Czechoslovakia on the right bank of the Danube opposite Bratislava. The map makers of the Paris Peace Conference also re-

\* The Italian treaty and, in particular, negotiations preceding the establishment of the Free Territory of Trieste are not discussed here as they have only an indirect effect on the political problems of *Danubian Europe*.

turned to Rumania northern Transylvania, regained by Hungary during World War II through the assistance of Hitler, and awarded all of southern Slovakia to Czechoslovakia. The new boundaries closely follow the lines established by the Treaty of Trianon after World War I and create substantial minority problems in Rumania and Czechoslovakia. Hungarian delegates pressed for the adoption of treaty provisions guaranteeing the rights of Magyar minorities in neighboring countries, but these efforts were dismissed as potentially dangerous revisionist claims. The problem where the solution seems most unsatisfactory and temporary is the Transylvanian frontier between Rumania and Hungary. Although the racial distribution of the inhabitants is remarkably complex in this region, the present line is actually the converse of an "ethnic" boundary and leaves large enclaves of minority groups in each of the two countries. Hungary immediately claimed a few minor border modifications in her favor, and Rumania recently indicated a willingness to enter into a "friendly discussion" of the Transylvanian question.\* Rumania can well afford to express an attitude of neighborly compromise, for she emerges from the new territorial settlement as the strongest of the defeated states, while Hungary again finds herself surrounded by a ring of powerful and antirevisionist neighbors. With northern Transylvania as a tangible geographic gain in the west, Rumania was forced to yield two strategically significant border regions in the east. The peace treaty confirmed the cession of Bessarabia to the Soviet Union and sanctioned the return of southern Dobruja to Bulgaria. The latter was thus permitted to retain an important part of the gains made during her cooperation with Axis forces. Not all Bulgarian claims were granted, however; she failed to obtain a southern outlet to the Aegean Sea in spite of her delegates' strenuous insistence at the Paris Peace Conference. Bulgaria's controversial and much-disputed border toward Greece was therefore not modified in 1946.<sup>21</sup>

#### MILITARY CLAUSES

The present Danubian treaty settlements insist on definite military and naval limitations for the defeated nations. These involve the destruction of old fortifications, the demilitarization of certain strategic areas, and a considerable reduction of all army, navy, and air forces of the three satellite states to the following levels:

\* For an analysis of recent developments in Transylvania, cf. pp. 251-253 in the Rumania and Hungary section of Chapter VIII.

|                       | <i>Rumania</i> | <i>Hungary</i> | <i>Bulgaria</i> |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Army                  | 120,000        | 65,000         | 55,000          |
| Anti-aircraft forces  | 5,000          | 0              | 1,800           |
| Navy, personnel       | 5,000          | 0              | 3,500           |
| tonnage               | 15,000         | 0              | 7,250           |
| Air Forces, personnel | 8,000          | 5,000          | 5,200           |
| aircraft              | 150            | 90             | 90              |

All three states are forbidden to possess, construct, or experiment with atomic weapons, bombing aircraft, self-propelled or guided missiles, and any guns with a range over thirty kilometers. Restrictions on the construction or acquisition of certain types of army and navy equipment are analogous to those in the Italian treaty, which served as a general model in the drawing up of these drastic military clauses. The net result of this all-round demilitarization is that the former Eastern European enemy states are rendered incapable of providing armed assistance to any outside power. In the present Danubian balance of military power, heavily armed Yugoslavia, surrounded by weakened and chastised small countries, is destined to play a conspicuous role of regional leadership.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER II

1. For the full text of the Yalta Declaration, cf. *The Department of State Bulletin*, Washington, Feb. 18, 1945, p. 215.
2. *The Department of State Bulletin*, Aug. 12, 1945, p. 211. The basic principles of United States foreign policies toward Eastern Europe are ably analyzed by Isaac A. Stone, in "American Support of Free Elections in Eastern Europe," *The Department of State Bulletin*, Part I, Aug. 17, 1947, pp. 311-323, and Part II, Aug. 24, 1947, pp. 407-413, 434.
3. In the *Economist's* opinion it is precisely the Communist control of the military and police systems in Eastern Europe which guarantees the Sovietization of the entire region. "The grip will not be quickly broken by Western commercial or cultural influence, nor by protests at judicial murder."—"Eastern Europe Since Truman," *The Economist*, Dec. 13, 1947, p. 951.
4. "The Stakes in Central Europe," *The Tablet* (London), Oct. 4, 1947, p. 210.
5. "European Socialists," *The Economist*, Oct. 11, 1947, pp. 589-590. The *Economist* concludes that in Moscow's opinion all bridges must be broken and European socialism eventually must accept brotherhood, in its Soviet version, "even if the process involves knocking in every Socialist head from



- Warsaw to Penzance." Cf. also the excellent analytical survey in "Socialists of Eastern Europe," *The Economist*, Aug. 16, 1947, pp. 284-287.
6. Gabriel A. Almond, "The Resistance and the Political Parties of Western Europe," *Political Science Quarterly*, March 1947, p. 57.
  7. É. Buré, "A Maniu Per" ("The Maniu Trial"), *Haladás*, Nov. 13, 1947, p. 2.
  8. Hugh Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe between the Wars, 1918-1941*, pp. 94-95.
  9. Samuel L. Sharp, "Polish Elections and American Policy," *American Perspective*, April 1947, p. 10 *et seq.* Sharp reaches the acceptable conclusion that the postwar peasant parties lack a crystallized social and economic ideology, except hostility to socialism. They can easily be captured by right-wing elements and the alternatives now seem to be communism and fascism, rather than communism and democracy. The choice is between the extreme Right and the extreme Left, both totalitarian in form.
  10. "Exile Peasant Union Seeks Western Aid," *The New York Herald Tribune*, Jan. 20, 1948; also, Feliks Gross, "Émigré Groups from Eastern Europe," *The New York Herald Tribune*, May 31, 1948.
  11. William Diebold, Jr., "East-West Trade and the Marshall Plan," *Foreign Affairs*, July 1948, pp. 712-714; also D. Petrovsky, "Foreign Trade Policy of the People's Democracies," *The New Times*, Jan. 7, 1948.
  12. "Poles, Czech Map Joint Industry under Pattern of 'Molotov Plan,'" *The New York Times*, Jan. 12, 1948.
  13. The collaboration agreements are ably analyzed by Herbert Feis in "The Conflict over Trade Ideologies," *Foreign Affairs*, Jan. 1947, pp. 217-228. For further discussion of these agreements, cf. the chapters on Hungary and Rumania in this book, under the headings "Economic Reconstruction."
  14. "The Russian Sphere in Europe, Economic Planning in Eastern Europe," *The World Today*, Oct. 1947, p. 434, and "Weak Spots in Russia's Trade Web," *World Report*, Nov. 18, 1947, pp. 8-9.
  15. S. L. Sharp, *Nationalization of Key Industries in Eastern Europe* (Washington, 1946), p. 41. Sharp rightfully concludes that "in the long run there can be no wide discrepancy between the economic order of the Soviet Union and that of the neighboring countries under its influence." On the whole, every possible alternative to the present *mixed economy* order of the countries in the Soviet orbit will depend upon the development of the Soviet Union.—*Ibid.*, p. 43.
  16. The statement by John K. Galbraith that "Soviet influence in eastern Europe has not resulted in the totally closed system that so often has been

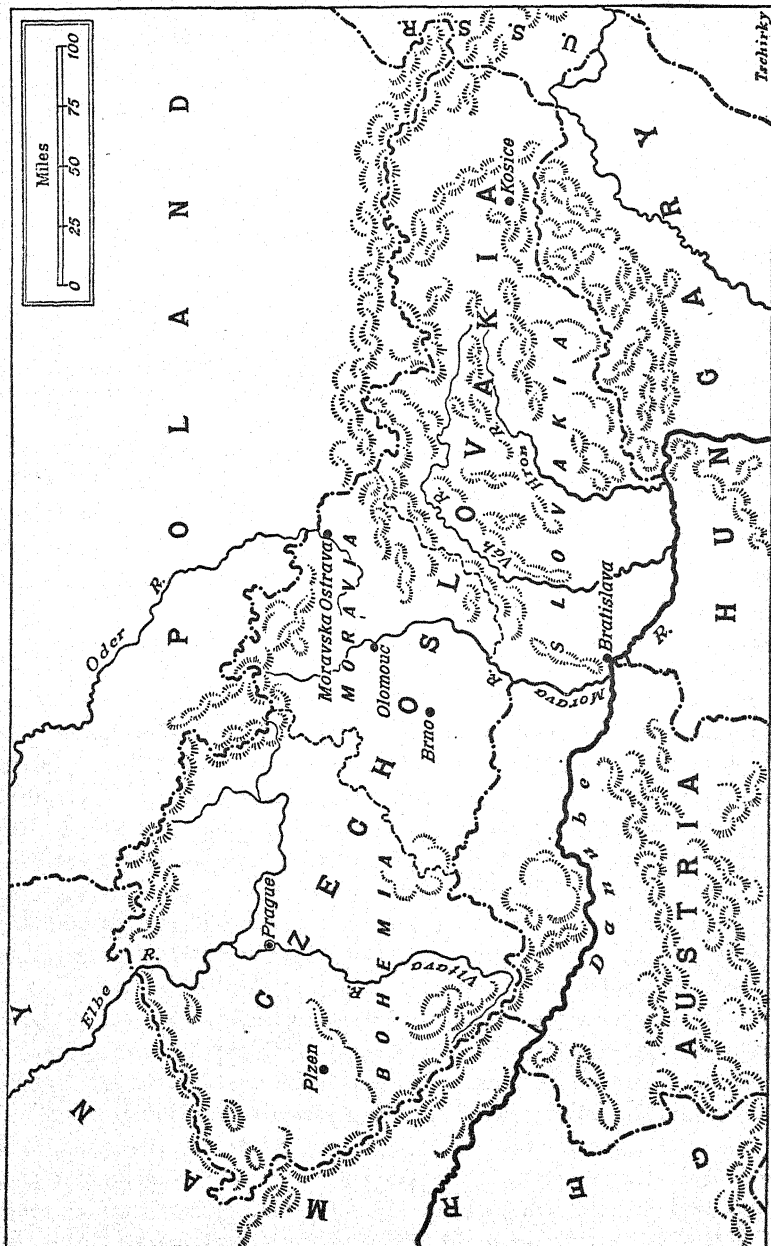
- pictured in recent months" is still true today. Cf. *Recovery in Europe* (Washington, 1946), p. 6.
17. Winifred N. Hadsel, "The Five Axis Satellite Peace Treaties," *Foreign Policy Reports*, April 15, 1947, p. 22 *et seq.*
  18. "The Draft Treaties of Peace," *The World Today*, Dec. 1946, p. 585.
  19. In an effort to save at least the remnants of Hungarian economy, the U. S. government fought to reduce the original bill to \$200,000,000. The American representative received no support from Soviet Russia or other Eastern European governments, and the reparations burden was set at the higher sum.
  20. Cf. the precise summary of the "Danube Control" problem in C. E. Black, "The Axis Satellites and the Great Powers," *Foreign Policy Reports*, May 1, 1946, p. 52. Although written early in 1946, Black's final comment is still of significance today: "The European powers are now faced with the problem of establishing a new commission, or commissions, to regulate the Danube in such a way as to meet both the new conditions existing in Southeastern Europe and the suggestion made by the United States at the Potsdam Conference for the internationalization of waterways."
  21. The preservation of this geographic *status quo* logically follows from the terse statement of the peace treaty with Bulgaria that "*the frontiers of Bulgaria, as shown on the map annexed to the present treaty, shall be those which existed on Jan. 1, 1941.*" Part I, Article 1 (*italics mine*); for comments and further interpretation cf. W. N. Hadsel, "The Five Axis Satellite Peace Treaties," *loc. cit.*, pp. 29-30.

### III • Czechoslovakia

The military and diplomatic drama of World War II began and ended in Czechoslovakia, key country of the Danubian Basin. In spite of the fury of Nazi destruction and the long years of oppressive occupation, Czechoslovakia emerged in 1945 fundamentally unchanged in spirit and in state structure. Until the sudden seizure of power by the Communists in February 1948, she was the most independent country east of the Rhine, undoubtedly the most prosperous, and certainly the most democratic. For a period of two and a half years, Czechoslovakia enjoyed significant advantages over her neighbors in Central and Eastern Europe.

Economically the Czechs were by far the strongest people in Danubian Europe. This was a generally recognized fact before World War II, and the effect of the war itself, although it considerably distorted Czech economy, did not destroy the industrial potential of the country. On the contrary, since the geographic stronghold of Bohemia was largely immune from attack by air and land, not only did the basic industries survive more or less intact but they were actually strengthened by the Germans themselves. After the collapse of Germany and the country's liberation by the Red Army, the Czechs were prepared to remedy the profound economic disruption throughout the country and make an early start in reconstruction. Industries and agriculture were set to work almost immediately in May 1945, and the manifold problems in industrial reconversion were forcefully approached by the characteristic postwar methods of centralized economic planning.

Until the dramatic coup of 1948, a predictable and rational type of development characterized the pattern of political reconstruction. In a Danubian Europe torn by bitter ideological strife, the Czechoslovakia of 1945-1947 served as a prototype of *evolutionary* political progress. There were no occupation troops in this country, and the notorious



manifestations of big-power pressure had to originate from the outside. Internal political stability was further enhanced by the fortunate coincidence that, practically alone of all recently occupied European countries, there was no profound cleavage here between the resistance movement at home and the legally constituted government in exile abroad. The enthusiasm with which the returning government was received in Prague best displayed the fundamental unity of Czech politics. The nonpartisan and unanimous endorsement of Eduard Benes as president of the postwar republic further accentuated the absence of disturbing political disagreements and the Czechs' obvious natural tendency to coalition and compromise. The first wave of postwar enthusiasm thus produced conditions of political stability which made for rapid reconstruction and persisted until the revolutionary upheaval of 1948.

On the whole, Czechoslovakia faced the first wave of postwar difficulties with a fairly strong economy and a viable political system. The outstanding issue was her altered power position among the nations of continental Europe. The entrance of the Soviet Union into the Danubian Basin was one of the most significant developments in the political geography of Europe, immensely increasing the strategic advantages of the Soviet Union. Czechoslovakia was faced with the geographic reality that, through the merger of Carpatho-Ruthenia into the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Soviet Union appeared as an immediate neighbor and ever-present zone of attraction, compelling the Czechs to close political and economic collaboration. The original agreement on Carpathian Ruthenia was signed by the two governments in June 1945 and transferred the easternmost province of Czechoslovakia to the Soviet Union for incorporation into the Ukraine.<sup>1</sup> The strange method of a prearranged, unilateral cession of territory symbolically indicates the direct impact of Soviet influence in this area, and points to the fundamentally altered role of Czechoslovakia, which used to serve as a Danubian exponent of Western orientation. Today her destinies are firmly tied to the Soviet Union, which exerts a strong and increasingly steady pressure on Czech foreign and domestic politics.

## THE DOMESTIC POLITICS OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

### CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT; PRESIDENT, CABINET, AND PARLIAMENT

For a period of two and a half years, postwar Czechoslovakia succeeded in progressing along the road of even and gradual political development. Prior to February 1948, the Czechoslovak Republic was a

parliamentary state based on constitutional development reverting to the legal status of 1920, when the first Czech Assembly successfully completed the arduous task of drawing up a constitution. The document of 1920 has been left untouched in its basic, structural features. The highest governmental and executive power is still shared by two organs, the president of the republic and a cabinet appointed by the president and responsible to the National Assembly or Parliament. Legislative power for the entire Czech Republic is vested in the two houses of the national Parliament. The broad authority of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate bears out the statement that "legislative supremacy, the ascendancy of parliament, the monopoly on law-making by the official legislative body, were the foundation stones of the reign of justice contemplated by the Constitution."<sup>2</sup>

The president's powers were so impressive that, prior to her transformation into a Communist state, Czechoslovakia displayed features of a *presidential* rather than a parliamentary form of government. According to the scholarly authors of the constitution, the head of state enjoyed full legal competence within five different, yet equally significant, spheres of government. In international relations the president represented his country in all negotiations with other states. He concluded and ratified international treaties with the exception of certain military or territorial arrangements, which could be carried out only with the consent of the National Assembly or Parliament. The president declared the existence of a state of war, but had to submit terms for a concluded peace to the Assembly for its approval. In matters of civil administration the president possessed broad powers, strikingly unusual for most modern parliamentary regimes. He appointed and dismissed the prime minister and members of the cabinet, and had the right to be present at and preside over meetings of the cabinet. He appointed university professors and higher civil servants, and had jurisdiction over the entire civil service. In the military sphere the president is still commander in chief of all the armed forces of the republic. In legislative matters he summons, prorogues, and dissolves the National Assembly. He has the further right to call its members for extraordinary sessions if he deems it necessary. The president signs the bills passed by the Assembly but his signature must be accompanied by that of the prime minister. He has no legislative initiative, for this is entirely in the hands of Parliament and the cabinet. The president has a limited *suspensive* veto on bills passed by the National Assembly. In the judicial sphere the president is empowered to appoint all higher

judges, acting on the proposal of the cabinet. He can grant amnesties in penal and disciplinary cases.

The president of the republic is elected for seven years by a joint session of both houses of the National Assembly. The fundamental stability of Czechoslovakia is strikingly revealed by the fact that throughout its existence as a republic the country had only three presidents, Thomas G. Masaryk (1920–1935), Eduard Benes (1935–1948), and Klement Gottwald (1948—). The outstanding personality and character of the first two men—Masaryk, the founder of the republic, and Dr. Benes, his able successor both in Prague and in exile—lent the institution of the presidency a special, almost supraconstitutional, significance which was of inestimable value in setting the course of domestic politics in the turbulent years of the nineteen thirties and forties.

The cabinet of ministers is closely connected with the presidency in every phase of the government's functions. According to the constitution the cabinet enjoys *all executive powers* except those expressly reserved to the president. Through such general clauses of competence the cabinet has emerged as the chief organ of government in all civil matters, frequently eclipsing even the head of state.<sup>3</sup> The cabinet's firmly established authority also explains the vigor and insistence of Czechoslovakia's present-day Communist party on appropriating for itself every important ministerial seat. The cabinet has two distinctive powers: the right to initiate legislation, and the authority to issue decrees. The significant initiative of cabinet ministers does not completely exclude the president from the delicate and constitutionally safeguarded process of legislation; Czech governmental practice has gradually overcome this limitation on presidential prerogative. All government bills are now brought to the notice of the president before they actually reach Parliament, thus enabling him to express his views on the preliminary draft of any bill and to discuss them in sessions of the cabinet. This valuable extraconstitutional procedure has helped to limit the use of the presidential veto to extreme and unusual cases.

Unlike the sad experience of Germany's Weimar Republic, the Czech government's decree power was never abused by members of the pre-Communist, coalition cabinet. Under the constitution of 1920, decrees can be issued only for the execution of a specific statute, and then only within the framework of that statute. According to this restrictive provision the postwar cabinets proceeded to issue decrees and exercised this prerogative mostly in the realm of civil administration and in military matters. As one author well observed, "The absolute

predominance of the cabinet over the president in this important sphere of governmental powers naturally greatly strengthened the position of the cabinet."<sup>4</sup> Indirectly, these broad powers lent added emphasis to the structure, role, and objectives of political parties whose more prominent and individually designated members came to occupy key positions in the cabinet.

The Czech constitution of 1920 is based on a scrupulous division of major political functions. The legislative branch of the government occupies, therefore, a position equaling that of the executive in this hierarchy of top-level activities of the state. One of the foundation stones of the democratic system of prewar Czechoslovakia was the Parliament's legislative supremacy, its monopoly in lawmaking. The legislature itself is known as the National Assembly and is composed of a Chamber of Deputies and a Senate, with a definite legislative primacy accorded to the lower chamber. In all budgetary and financial matters, for example, the Chamber has exclusive right to final legislation. The lower house was established primarily as a decision-making body, while the Senate fulfills the role of a chamber of legislative deliberation. One of the real differences between the two bodies derives from the age qualifications for membership, the minimum set for the Chamber being thirty years, whereas that for the Senate is forty-five. To the difference in age was added that of size, the Chamber being comprised of a membership of 300, and the Senate having only 150 members. Because of these divergent characteristics the real balance of parliamentary power obviously lies in the Chamber, which became the scene of partisan conflict and compromise throughout the first, two-and-a-half-year phase of postwar politics.

A set of major constitutional guarantees is attached to the operation of the electoral system. Universal suffrage exists with the equal, direct, and secret ballot; women as well as men exercise their right to vote from the age of twenty-one for the Chamber of Deputies, and from the age of twenty-six for the Senate. The voting itself is exercised on the basis of a modified system of proportional representation with collective lists of candidates drawn up by the individual political parties. This system not only enabled the *prewar* minorities to be fully represented in the legislative bodies (before Munich there were representatives of no fewer than six nationalities), but assured even minor political groups, with a negligible number of adherents, representation in the Parliament. The important fact that the voting is carried out for party lists, and not for individuals, has a number of further repercussions.



Members of Parliament are clearly at the mercy of their party, as they owe their seat to the party supporting them. Conversely, if a candidate or a member of Parliament embarrasses his party leaders or disagrees with their views, a rigid discipline will be enforced and the member will be dropped. Candidates are thus subject to harsh rules of strictly partisan behavior and are imbued with a greater feeling of responsibility toward their political group than toward their constituents. This trend frequently contributes to a strange aura of civic indifference and personal obscurity. The great majority of Czechoslovak voters select first and foremost a political party and seldom vote for individuals. This process inevitably implies that once a candidate is elected, he finds himself at the mercy of his party. Because of the elaborate electoral system and the peculiar dictates of group discipline, Czech political parties emerge as a major force in shaping domestic affairs. They are the real backbone of politics, and the whole of public life is penetrated by the atmosphere of partisan politics. In the interesting comment of a recent visitor to Czechoslovakia, "Indeed what worried me most . . . was this very dominance of party. I soon got into the habit of asking first about anyone I met or who was referred to, 'What Party does he belong to?' I had the impression that membership of or work for a party is often a surer road to position and power than service to the state or society as a whole."<sup>5</sup>

*Political Parties in Pre-Munich Czechoslovakia.*—In the prewar period a startlingly large number of groups and associations assumed the status of political parties; consequently a great deal of confusion prevailed. As a matter of fact, there were few countries in the world where such a variety in party platforms, in political terminology, and in ideological objectives could be found as in the Czechoslovakia before World War II. There was, for example, a Social Democratic party and a party of Czechoslovak Socialists which were extremely close in a political sense, yet always retained their independence of status. Apart from the basic criteria customarily influencing party structure, there were strange functional groups which appeared at various times and dissolved soon after national elections. Such were the Debtors' party, the Tenants' party, the House-Owners' party or, amazingly enough, the League against Fixed-Order Lists of Candidates. These groups seldom swung the parliamentary balance of power, and their significance consisted mostly in obscuring the fundamental issues underlying Czech domestic politics.

The major prewar parties can best be characterized by the dominant features of relative stability and general agreement on the broad principles determining the basic organization of the political, economic, and social life of the community. The National Socialist party, as far removed from Hitler's degenerate version of National Socialism as is politically possible, has been perhaps the most prominent middle-of-the-road element in pre-Munich Czechoslovakia. It stood firmly between the Social Democrats and such violently nationalistic organizations as the Young Czechs. It was strongly attached to democratic institutions but was also nationalistic to the extent of advocating such measures as a powerful standing army. It was socialist in its demands for collectivization by means of careful development, but nationalist in preaching a moral rebirth of the country. This mixed program appealed to several large groups of the population, particularly to the urban middle class. Consequently the National Socialists always had a substantial number of seats in both houses of Parliament, were in control of several influential metropolitan dailies (Prague and Brno were the party strongholds), and usually included in their membership several leading Czech intellectuals. Eduard Benes, both as foreign minister and as president of the republic, was officially affiliated with the National Socialists.

The Social Democrats emerged in two different national elections, those of 1929 and 1935, as one of the most promising parties with outstanding tactical leadership and a strong appeal to the Czech working class. Their party program was based on firm demands for a methodical organization and socialization of production. They considered as a first step toward this impressive goal the nationalization of mines and a large degree of state intervention in the country's economic life. Social reforms called for the increased protection of workers and employees by means of far-reaching legislation; their widely read newspapers and magazines, particularly *Pravo Lidu* in Prague, fought for the completion of political democracy by economic freedoms. The Social Democrats occasionally suffered parliamentary setbacks and a loss of prestige because the German and Hungarian Social Democratic parties remained aloof and independent from their Czech colleagues. In terms of struggle against dictatorship, both in its native and Nazi-German variants, the Social Democratic record is probably better and more consistent than that of any other moderate or leftist party.

Numerically the Czech Agrarians were the most powerful of the prewar groups. Under the able guidance of such shrewd political leaders

as Antonin Svehla, Jan Malypetr, and Dr. Milan Hodza, the Agrarians participated in coalition after coalition, surviving even the most devastating cabinet crises by their varied political maneuvers and shrewd last-minute compromises. They succeeded in setting a precedent to the postwar National Front tactics of the Communist party, to the broad government-bloc concept so characteristic of the first postwar regimes in Danubian Europe. The Agrarian program unequivocally called for the defense of private property and for unrestricted, free competition. Although the promotion of broad agricultural interests and the protection of agrarian production were often advocated by its leaders, the party lost its specifically peasant-group character at an early stage and, as Hugh Seton-Watson observes, "became an *Interessengemeinschaft* of people eager for political and economic spoils."<sup>6</sup> This variegated background spelled disaster for the Agrarians of the postwar period and at present the party is conspicuously absent from the Communist-dominated scene of national politics.

Of the active *minor* parties, the Czech Populists deserve mention. Also known as the Catholic People's party, this group stands for an application of the principles of Christianity to public life, politics, social welfare, and culture. Its members believe in a defense of Catholic interests on the basis of a tolerant Christian democracy. Active and influential throughout the election years of 1929 and 1935, the Populists lost a great deal of ground in recent years and currently are accorded a minimum of "ceremonial recognition" in the government of self-appointed Communist leaders. Close to the Czech Populists was the Slovak Populist party, which had a similar platform with one major addition, the unconditional demand for complete Slovak autonomy and for a thorough reorganization of the constitutional structure of the republic. The Slovak Populists later surrendered their leadership to such notorious and disruptive nationalists as Hlinka and Tiso who, for several years after the collapse of a free Czechoslovakia, helped to rule Slovakia for Hitler. The Small Traders' party was a similar group; appealing to the lower middle classes of cities, it amassed close to a million votes in 1935. It believed in the protection of artisans and small shopkeepers against the inroads of socialist ideas and the encroachments by big industry. Its party organization was particularly active in Prague and in Olomouc of Moravia, both of them typical large-scale industrial centers.

Several violently rightist groups also usurped the many privileges of prewar parliamentary life; of these the National Union, the Fascist Na-

tional Association, the Magyar Christian Socialist and Nationalist parties were the most vocal, while the notorious Sudeten German party was undoubtedly the most explosive. The latter was motivated by a childishly simple political blueprint of two points: absolute national autonomy for the Sudeten Germans, and bitter, unrelenting struggle against Marxism. The party professed loyalty to the republic and respect for its democratic principles, but in reality it disseminated straight Nazi views among the German communities of the Sudeten province. In 1935, spurred on by the first few expansionist moves of Hitler's government in "Greater Germany," the Sudeten German party suddenly gained the second largest number of seats of all parliamentary groups, being surpassed only by the moderate Agrarians. Under the frantic leadership of the ex-high-school teacher Konrad Henlein, this party of "youth and crisis" represented a revolt of the rising Sudeten German generation against the compromises and half measures of the older party chiefs. It clearly reflected the ideology of the Third Reich and materially contributed to the Munich Conference of 1938, to the temporary paralysis of all progressive forces in Czech politics, and finally to the diplomatic liquidation of Czechoslovakia.

Set against the background of domestic politics, prewar Czech communism was perhaps less radical, less dogmatically rigid than its equivalents in neighboring areas of Danubian Europe. The Czech Republic was one of the very few Central European nations which in the interwar period did not impatiently outlaw the Communist party but permitted its members to retain their political rights throughout the country's recent history. In 1920 a sharp split occurred between the right- and left-wing Socialists, compelling the latter to join the ranks of the Communist party, which gradually established considerable support among the industrial workers, the German and Hungarian minority groups, and the backward peasants of Slovakia and Ruthenia. In 1929 and 1935 the Communists increased their votes, mostly at the expense of other left-wing groups. It is interesting to note that the total number of votes cast for Communist members of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate amounted to approximately 1,600,000 in 1935, thus projecting the Communists into competition with leading political parties. With the accelerating rate of electoral success the Communists also began to unfurl their true ideological colors. In 1936 the leading party organ, *Rude Pravo*, a Prague daily, tersely summarized Communist objectives as determined class struggle, complete collectivism at home, and establishment of the international

solidarity of the proletariat abroad. Similar leitmotifs were voiced by other party publications, such as *Pravda* in Bratislava, the *Delnicka Rovnost* of Brno, and scattered newspapers in major industrial centers.

Of the acknowledged pre-Munich leaders of the party, Klement Gottwald was the most prominent. He is now one of the bosses of the postwar Communist organization, and President of the Czech Republic. Although he was a vocal and ubiquitous politician, he never became a member of the cabinet prior to World War II. The Communist party was definitely stopped short of participation in the coalition governments of this period while the Social Democrats, the Agrarians, the Populists, and the National Socialists sat together in the same cabinets, collaborating in the affairs of state and usually managing to agree on a workable program for the government. The postwar group of Communists came back "with a vengeance," gradually displacing from the cabinet all of the bourgeois parties of an earlier vintage.

*Political Parties in Postwar Czechoslovakia.*—The political parties of Czechoslovakia tested their newly won vitality in May 1946, in the country's first postliberation election. Most of the confusing party divisions, so characteristic of the prewar era, had slowly disappeared and the number of competing political parties was sharply reduced as a result of pre-election agreements among the party leaders and also because of the strong denunciation of the pre-Munich system by the late President Benes. In his widely read *Democracy Today and Tomorrow*, Benes firmly criticized the evils resulting from an excessive number of parties and urged their reduction as "a manifestation of real patriotic statesmanship." Consequently a compromise was devised by extraconstitutional means and an oversimplified division of left and right parties was established, with a center group to hold the precarious balance of parliamentary power.<sup>7</sup> The four most important national parties thus recognized were the Social Democrats, the National Socialists, the People's party, and the Communists.

In terms of partisan politics the most significant move was the authorization to participate in the forthcoming national elections accorded to the major political parties. Because of the touchy problems of political bitterness and open animosity between the Czech provinces and Slovakia, official permission was carefully granted to all Slovak parties cleared of the taint of collaboration with German occupational authorities. In general, a far-reaching disfranchisement of collaborators took place. For example, the entire Agrarian party, from which so

many prominent statesmen and prime ministers had come, was banned, along with the more notorious Hlinka party, the National Democrats, the fascist Stribrný, and various local German and Magyar minority parties. The thorough process of political cleansing was justified by the particular significance of the national elections, which were to decide the composition of the new postwar Constitutional Assembly. As such, the interim government of the country, which had just returned from several years' exile in London, felt that every step leading toward the renewal of a *formal* legal order would have to be carefully safeguarded and redefined. The political parties designated as participants in the national elections had to approve initially of a brief political blueprint, the so-called Kosice Program (named after the Slovakian city, site of the interparty conference), which centered around two major statements. The first of these involved the stipulation that Eduard Benes resume his prewar constitutional position as President of the Republic. This condition was unanimously accepted and Benes returned to his country as head of state acknowledged by democrats and communists alike. This nonpartisan agreement put a considerable curb on political conflicts. The second item included the recognition of the Slovaks as an autonomous people and the incorporation of their full national rights into a *new federal Czech-Slovak constitution*. This point was never completely agreed to by the party delegates, who represented strongly divergent views on the key nationality issue of the recently liberated republic.

In spite of the obvious bitterness of large minority groups, which were not only deprived overnight of their electoral rights but lost their own distinctive political parties, the elections themselves were "secret, unfettered, just and technically perfect in execution," according to the testimony of impartial observers. The inevitable postwar trend of Central and Eastern European politics asserted itself in Czechoslovakia to the extent that the Communists emerged as the strongest party organization, polling 38 per cent of the vote, or 2.7 million out of a total of 7.6 million. President Benes' former party, the National Socialists, came out second best with 18.5 per cent, or approximately one half of the number of Communist votes. The most surprising development was undoubtedly the weakness of the two also-rans, the Social Democrats and the Catholic People's party. The Social Democrats were rolled back from second position to fifth place in relative party strength and their vacillating, ineffective leaders were particularly distressed by the party's losses in the workmen's vote, most of which went straight

to Communist candidates. On the other hand, early appraisals attributed the Communists' remarkable success to aggressive tactical leadership.

*Communist Victory and Party Strategies (1946-1947).*—These electoral triumphs gave the Communist party substantial weight and a broad representation in the new postelection government which immediately replaced colorless Zdenek Fierlinger's temporary cabinet. Most of Fierlinger's left-wing Social Democratic followers, called upon to serve in the interim government prior to the country's first general elections, were now pushed into the background of national politics. The Communists' pre-Munich champion, Klement Gottwald, assumed the prime minister's position and under his leadership the party gained much stronger representation in the government than its high percentage of votes originally warranted. In addition to the Prime Ministership and the Ministry of Information, the Communists by 1947 acquired the portfolios dealing with the political and economic bases of reconstruction; fellow Communists thus held the ministries of the Interior, Finance, Agriculture, Internal Trade, Social Welfare, and National Defense. Although the head of the Foreign Office is usually a nonparty appointment, the candidacy of Jan Masaryk was strongly supported by the Communists, who also managed to apply direct pressure on him by insisting on an aggressive and shrewd Communist secretary of state for foreign affairs, in the person of Vladimir Clementis.

In keeping with the coalition character of the four-party government, the remaining three non-Communist groups were temporarily offered a fairly liberal representation in the cabinet. The National Socialists held the significant ministries of Education, Justice, and Foreign Trade, while the extreme left wing of the Social Democrats, the party which has lost most conspicuously since prewar days, was able to retain the portfolios of Industry and Food. One of the minor surprises of the last Czech national election was the extent to which the Communists neutralized the Ministry of Food, operating instead through their own minister of agriculture, whose services gained the party decisive support in the doubtful peasant communities. Despite such obvious strategic moves, Czechoslovakia was the only Danubian country where a fairly successful example of Communist-Democratic collaboration existed. The cabinet was in reality a government without a *recognized* or *organized* opposition. The broad structure of the National Front ranged from Communists to Populists, with several clergymen in high

governmental position. It is true that some of the vigorously anti-Communist parties, particularly the Agrarians and the National Democrats, were purged at the very threshold of the present political period, leaving only three major non-Communist leftist groups alive. Nevertheless the high incidence of interparty collaboration, at least in the initial phase of postwar reconstruction, well explained the surprising degree of national stability. For a two-year period the Communists generally lived up to their promise to cooperate with liberal, parliamentary, non-Communist parties in a broad and multicolored coalition front. They apparently deemed it prudent to keep well within the bounds of legality. During this time they followed the line clearly expressed in one of their representative dailies, the *Rude Pravo*, which stated in May 1947, "The Communists do not want a majority in order to be able to dictate but to rebuild the country more successfully . . . . They will not exclude anyone from participation in the Government who wishes to cooperate with them. They hope that the majority of the nation will support the Communist Party."<sup>8</sup>

The period of temporary truce reached its end by the latter part of 1947, bringing with it a remarkable stiffening of Communist attitudes, a gradual abandonment of the restrained and cautious tactics which had been so unusual in Danubian politics. In spite of increased pressure from the Soviet Union, the Communists appeared to have lost ground as compared to the triumphant summer of 1946. Their setback in popular appeal was caused by frequent and sharp deviations from the spirit of friendly compromise so characteristic of the immediate post-liberation period. This new phase of political strategy caused violent reaction even in the Communist party, whose strong democratic elements suddenly realized that they were "displaced persons" within a new and strikingly illiberal movement. To prevent serious internal disruption and nation-wide loss of prestige, Prime Minister Gottwald was forced to acknowledge the difficulties his party had encountered. He stated that elements of reaction were at work within the party and the entire National Front, attacking particularly the key organs of Police, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Public Information, all three of them under direct Communist control. According to Gottwald, the 1946 results of national reconstruction were wholly unsatisfactory because of the political atmosphere prevailing within the coalition itself. He blamed reactionary circles for attempting to ruin the very foundations of Czech foreign policy, and for demanding that Czechoslovakia abandon the new *all-Slavic front* of Eastern Euro-



pean peoples. Gottwald's remarks were further elaborated by an aggressive vice chairman of the Czech National Council: "Let all the world know that our frontiers do not end behind Kosice; these frontiers embrace the world, from the borders of Germany down to the Adriatic, to the frontiers of Bulgaria and Greece. And they stretch from the Beskid mountains to the Pacific. These are our frontiers . . . . *Never again will Czechoslovakia pursue any other but a Slav policy.*"<sup>9\*</sup>

Several decisive moves were envisioned by the Communist party leadership to counteract the slowly rising influence of political "reaction." The party's over-all objectives were restated in an aggressive and determined manner, coincident with the launching of a new nation-wide membership drive. In their official version, the four most significant goals were the following:

- 1) Complete revision of the country's first mild land reform carried out after World War I (this revision implies the general collectivization of Czech agriculture);
- 2) Elimination of all capitalist trading companies;
- 3) A thorough political purge within the ranks of the four coalition-forming parties, including recalcitrant members of the Communist party itself; and
- 4) A new solution of the complex problems of civil servants and public officials, with emphasis on their changed political and economic status in the postwar republic.

Simultaneously official Communist circles expressed the hope that the party would be able to strengthen its status in certain key provinces and areas of obvious ideological resistance. As a primary step they advocated the necessity of winning an absolute majority at the next elections, "in the interests of the Czech people and state." In the prime minister's words, "The crux of the Communist struggle for a majority lies in the countryside where the farmers must be won over." From the party's viewpoint Slovakia was obviously the weakest point of the republic. To give these statements a familiar emphasis, in September 1947 a Slovak terrorist plot was uncovered by the national Ministry of the Interior, which immediately arrested eighty leaders and organizers. The plot was allegedly aimed at the assassination of President Benes, Foreign Minister Masaryk, and several prominent members of the cabinet; in general, it was supposed to lead to the overthrow of the national government. Persons arrested in the conspiracy were described

\* Italics mine.

as including former members of the dissolved Hlinka party and followers of Josef Tiso, who was hanged after having been convicted of crimes against the Czech Republic. As a number of those implicated in the plot were employed by the government, their arrest led to a widespread purge of government offices and agencies, particularly in the Slovakian branches. There undoubtedly existed a fascist center of underground in Slovakia and its partial liquidation contributed to strengthening the security of the Czech state and, incidentally, that of the Communist party.

The Communist interpretation of a safe and secure state led to several radical developments in partisan politics. In the summer of 1945 a rather unusual bill was passed through Parliament concerning "the status of political parties." According to the detailed provisions of this law, parties would have to be officially listed with government authorities, and would rank with corporations under public law. New parties would be founded with government permission. This earlier legal regulation was followed in 1947 by the Communist announcement that there were to be no new political parties for the next general election, scheduled for the summer of 1948. On the contrary, the Communists exerted a great deal of pressure on the Social Democratic party, requesting it to join them in a powerful, single working-class party through a carefully staged *pre-election* merger. Although the Social Democratic party retained only a shadow of its pre-Munich status, its responsible leaders denied the first suggestion of a merger with the Communists. Toward the end of the year 1947 it was the consensus of political observers in Prague that any such radical upset of the carefully balanced four-party coalition would have seriously endangered the remaining political liberties of the country. It would have given the Communist party, which had already gained 38 per cent of the seats in 1946, an absolute parliamentary majority and would have provided it with the residual ministerial portfolios in the national cabinet.

#### OTHER ASPECTS OF DOMESTIC POLITICS

The inevitable element of postwar tension manifested itself in the form of three disturbing issues: the problems of the war crime trials, the purges of certain political groups, and the ever-present question of freedom of press and expression. One of the major post liberation tasks was the quick and effective organization of judicial processes needed to deal with the many types of wartime collaborators and political

criminals. A Retribution Act, speedily passed in 1945, set up a separate system of people's courts devoted to war guilt trials. This problem was particularly acute in Slovakia, which was now called upon to pay for its Hitlerian independence. There a new national court was established to mete out wholesale punishment for the entire hierarchy of wartime leadership, including Dr. Tiso, members of the notorious Tuka government, and leaders of the former Slovak parliament. Both sets of courts worked full time, and for a period of several months the rush of hastily staged political trials was impressive. Once the major criminals of the immediate post-Munich era were disposed of, criticism of the procedure of these trials became widespread and insistent. Sentences were frequently questioned as being either too heavy or too light, and even a high-ranking Communist member of the Czech National Council openly declared: "It is a fact that the national purge has been carried out badly. The common traitors have been punished, but the leaders of treason have often got off far too lightly."<sup>10</sup> To eliminate some of the friction connected with these nation-wide purge trials the original Retribution Act was allowed to expire in May 1947, the elaborate system of people's courts ceased to function, and regularly established regional courts took over the delicate and unrewarding task of judicial denazification.

Tensions generated by the highly publicized trials resulted in a series of official purges carried out among the leading Slovak groups of resistance. One of the four Slovak parties allowed to participate in the national elections of 1946 was the Democratic party, which unexpectedly emerged as the strongest group in the entire province, bolstered by 62 per cent of the Slovak vote. This electoral triumph compared favorably with the Communist vote, the largest single bloc of votes for the Czech provinces, and helped to establish the Slovak Democrats as a major force in domestic politics. Their party undoubtedly became the refuge of many former collaborationists and overemotional Slovak separatists. Resistance to the typical Czech parties, particularly the Communists, exploded with the death sentence and execution of Dr. Tiso and several of his immediate followers. Some members of the Slovak clergy and a large sector of the rural population objected to the summary liquidation of these "patriots" and violence flared up in several key areas of Slovakia. Attempts were made to resist both the rapidly intensifying pressure of the Communist party and the execution or long-term imprisonment of the Slovak wartime leaders. The localized frictions in turn caused an increasing group of Slovak politicians to insist on the

establishment of an independent state, bitterly charging that the national government never lived up to its pre-election promises of a new federal constitution as embodied in the Kosice Program. Separatists apparently penetrated even the highest councils of the coalition government for, in the summer of 1947, the Czech National Front suddenly announced a large-scale *political* purge of representatives from the two major parties of Slovakia, the Slovak People's party and the Democratic party. The general charge was that certain followers of Tiso were actively engaged in fighting the Czech state and were still occupying important positions in Slovak political life.<sup>11</sup> The hard core of this provincial resistance seems to have exasperated the government and culminated in an official resolution designed to silence the most dangerous elements in the separatist movement. Dated June 12, 1947, the National Front released the following statement: "All parties have agreed on the need for *the complete liquidation by legal means of all reactionary, fascist and subversive elements* which have remained as the evil legacy of the separatist tendencies of the Slovak People's party."<sup>12\*</sup> In the postwar politics of the country the Slovak "patriots" have thus assumed the role of internal disruption which, in an earlier period of the republic, was so consistently and disastrously played by the Sudeten Germans. Slovakia's separatist stand was not duplicated by any other province; according to press comments from Prague in 1947, the majority of the people apparently wanted a unified and indivisible state, not a federation or any other form of government based on constitutional dualism. There were many obvious trends toward a preservation and strengthening of the unitary state. Several far-reaching institutions, such as the new trade unions and the recently restored Sokol organization, firmly encompassed not only the Czech districts but all of Slovakia and other outlying provinces.

The issues of free speech and general freedom of expression were also injected in the postwar scene of domestic development. The basis of the bitter struggle was a strong Soviet note requesting governmental measures to halt the anti-Soviet propaganda of several Czech publications. The Communist minister of information, Vaclav Kopecky, immediately brought a suit of suspension against the worst offender, *Obzory*, a weekly paper of the Catholic-oriented People's party. The publication apparently attacked the military alliance of Czechoslovakia with the U.S.S.R. and the exuberant friendship of the Czech and Soviet Communist parties. In his complaint Kopecky firmly stated,

\* Italics mine.

"This anti-Soviet campaign cannot be tolerated. Our people cannot condone gratuitous insults and anti-Soviet allegations. We shall officially expose the sinister background of this anti-Soviet campaign at the most appropriate time."<sup>13</sup> The government's charges aroused the resentment of the democratically inclined press. *Lidova Demokracie*, another organ of the People's party, then under attack, replied to the effect that the Communist Ministry of Information would have a hard time proving its statements by supporting evidence. It raised the pertinent question as to whether the Soviet-Czech alliance and rapprochement actually implied an "*all-out attack against everything coming from the West.*" *Obzory* itself replied that if it was anti-Soviet for printing anti-Russian statements by Germans, including one by Adolf Hitler, it could also be called anti-British and anti-Catholic for having published German attacks on Britain and the Catholic Church. Communist party publications again demanded that something be done. They asserted that *Obzory* had been anti-Soviet from the beginning of its career, and full of tendentious anti-Soviet news.

The press fight had immediate political repercussions. A book- and newspaper-control office was established to exert direct nation-wide censorship on both types of publications. Under the instigation of the Ministry of Information, Parliament passed a comprehensive press bill in the summer of 1947. The law defines a "newspaperman" and accords him an official title; only legally recognized newspapermen can be regular members of newspaper staffs. The same principle applies to editors, whose new legal status is well expressed by the title of "responsible director." Opponents of the "journalist law" were quick to point out that these provisions actually gave legal form to the requirement that regular members of newspaper staffs must belong to the tightly controlled journalists' unions. Two such unions were established as soon as the law went into effect. One was the Union of Czech Journalists in Prague, the other a union of Slovak newspapermen in Bratislava. Being forced to employ only union-member journalists, newspapers and magazines were subjected to further restrictive legislation. They could be published only by public corporations, such as political parties, trade unions, certain cultural societies, the youth movement, or the army itself. Bitter fights accompanied the passage through Parliament and the final enactment of the press bill, this new legal code for a formerly free and competitive profession. In spite of early misgivings, the majority of Czech newspapermen seemed to agree that the danger of direct and overwhelming political pressure was exaggerated, and

that in Czechoslovakia even extreme Communists believed in a moderately free press. After the revolution of 1948 it was obvious, however, that a politically aggressive and well-organized majority within the journalists' union could expel everyone else from the profession. Further dangers lurked in the restrictive provision of the bill, according to which all newspapers would need a license from the Ministry of Information. There were no legal means of compelling officials in the Communist-controlled ministry to issue such prepublication licenses.

#### THE COMMUNIST SEIZURE OF POWER (1948)

The foundations of Czechoslovak democracy were abruptly destroyed by the *coup d'état* of February 1948, when all but the last steps were taken toward the establishment of a full-fledged people's republic. The Communist party assumed complete control in a violent upheaval of the country's political order and constitutional structure. The coalition government fell apart, the historic political parties were largely suppressed, the president was stripped of his broad powers, Parliament itself was completely reconstituted, and hundreds of prominent public figures were jailed or exiled.

The Czech crisis was precipitated by the Soviet Union's determination to strengthen an undeniably weak link in the chain of its military and political alliances. In the postwar treaty network of Eastern Europe the U.S.S.R. had actually succeeded in establishing closer alliances with many of its ex-enemies than that with its fellow Slav ex-ally, Czechoslovakia, which became increasingly conspicuous as the only missing link. A real challenge was presented to the Soviet Union in the Marshall plan for European reconstruction. The genuine popular interest with which this American proposal was received in Danubian Europe served as a warning to Russia and to the Communist parties of satellite countries, giving them a strong incentive to accelerate the drive toward complete consolidation. Soviet pressure was openly exerted in the summer of 1947, when Czechoslovakia was directed to refuse participation in the Marshall Plan. A great deal of bitterness was caused by this forced and unexpected refusal; opposition to Communism revived and, by the turn of the year, Czech Communists were faced with the real possibility of losing both their prestige and their parliamentary strength. In view of new national elections scheduled for May 1948, the Communist party felt compelled to move rapidly toward a destruction of the constitutional, evolutionary features of a successful postwar democracy. Prior to the February *Putsch*, the internal

political situation developed in a direction distinctly unfavorable to the Communist party. There were no Soviet occupation troops in the country; the people, long accustomed to political institutions of the Western type, had civil liberties; in Parliament the Communists had 114 seats out of 300 and were able to control it only because the Socialists, with 37 seats in Parliament, usually followed their political lead.

To strengthen their uncertain position, the Communists launched an aggressive drive during the first few weeks of 1948. The drive itself took two principal forms. The Communists first tried to get labor unions a full-fledged constitutional status, with the right to join in making political decisions. The second objective of the party involved the "communization" of the police. Under the expert leadership of Interior Minister Vaclav Nosek, Communists were put in command jobs, non-Communists demoted or transferred, and the police issued arms. The coalition parties of the government angrily protested this ominous process of police-transformation, and when Gottwald's group refused to back down in its efforts to purge the police, a political crisis developed overnight. The anti-Communist ministers resigned, the cabinet broke up, a streamlined police force took over public buildings, arrested opposition leaders, and worked closely with the new "action committees," formed by local Communists throughout the country. Before this wave of class warfare the Social Democrats, who should have held a key position but were divided among themselves, collapsed miserably. The delicate equilibrium of the governmental coalition was decisively upset, and a significant two-and-a-half-year period of successful democratic progress abruptly terminated, when a new cabinet was formed under the leadership of Klement Gottwald, including only prominent Communists and Communist sympathizers. President Benes hesitated for several crucial days before sanctioning the far-reaching changes which transformed his country into a Communist state. Subjected to irresistible external and internal pressures, he finally approved of the new cabinet and the sweeping political reforms accompanying the "new order." "It was for me not an easy decision to take," he stated; "indeed, it was for me personally very difficult. I have given long and earnest thought to the crisis, and have come to the conclusion that your proposal should be accepted. You know how long we discussed this matter and considered the ways of solving it."<sup>14</sup>

The political program of the new Czech state called for nation-wide purges of anti-Communist elements, for an intensified unity of the national front, and for constitutional, administrative measures channeling

all aspects of domestic life into state control and rigid supervision. The purges began at once not only in the political departments but also in industry and in the universities and schools. They were aimed primarily against former government officials, provincial political leaders, and members of various opposition political parties, now dissolved and partially liquidated. Persons who were not sympathetic with the Communist aims were removed, wherever possible, from positions of influence. Some refused to be either purged or subjected to a process of political reconversion. Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk, one of the few nonpartisan members of the former coalition government and bearer of a proud, historic name, committed suicide in March 1948. His tragic death served as an admirable protest against the enslavement of his country. In the new Czechoslovakia even this dramatic suicide was mercilessly publicized as the result of an "aggressive Western conspiracy." Masaryk's post was reassigned overnight and filled by the reliable Slovak Communist, Clementis, who, since 1945, had usurped all actual power in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The previous government of national unity, based on a coalition of all major political parties, was rapidly and effectively changed into the characteristic Eastern European organization known as the National Front. The Front itself is centered around an elaborate system of soviets, the Communist action committees, which were given the assignment of national consolidation on every level of administration. The committees operate under Premier Gottwald's direction and are actually governmental bodies similar to the revolutionary soviets of Russia. The intricate hierarchy of committees is headed by the Central Action Committee of Prague, which is under the direct supervision of Rudolf Slansky, powerful general secretary of the Communist party and one of the original signers of the Cominform declaration of October 1947. Theoretically the Central Committee is composed of representatives of all Czechoslovak parties, but in reality it is controlled by a large Communist majority. Throughout the country there appeared thousands of three- or four-man action committees, all led by Communists or left-wing Socialists. By March 1948 they succeeded in reviewing and censoring the press, in taking over the Bar Association, and in supervising factories, where they were empowered to hire and fire employees. They also expelled from universities faculty members and students who had opposed the Communists, and took charge of a tightly organized and Communist-led Union of Czechoslovak Youth. Their manifold activities were apparently so effective that, in Slansky's offi-



cial statement, the action committees would become "permanent organs of the people." He defined the strengthening of permanent action committees as the primary task of the new National Front; the elaborate network of soviets is thus called upon to serve as a front for the Communists.

The legal and political reforms of the new regime were considerably accelerated by the government's announcement of parliamentary elections for May 1948. There was little doubt as to the outcome of these elections, which were carefully prepared and anticipated by the cabinet. The voters' choice was to be confined either to a single list, including all party candidates in one bloc, or to a blank ballot. The endorsement of plans for a single list of candidates foreshadowed the merger of remaining political parties, particularly of the Communists and Social Democrats, into a uniform workers' party. The merger itself was expected ever since the Communists seized control of the government and pro-Communist Social Democrats expelled their leaders, taking over the entire party. In April 1948 Zdenek Fierlinger, a vacillating Russophile and typical protagonist of the left-wing Socialist group, significantly stated that a formal party congress would consider merger action with the Communists.<sup>15</sup> A new Czechoslovak Communist party (KCS) was formed, in obvious imitation of the principal consolidation moves of Communists and Social Democrats throughout Eastern Europe. Juridical foundations for these sweeping reforms were built by a new constitution which formally replaced the document of 1920, modifying several of its salient features. The constitution of 1948, a Communist party project, adopts the single list of candidates for parliamentary elections and carefully redefines the president's powers, granting him, as previously, a seven-year term. The prominent place of the national cabinet of ministers is reaffirmed, and a supplementary body established: a Board of Delegate Ministers, charged with the duty of administering Slovakia. A Slovak diet is also elected, by a single list and for a six-year term like that of the national Parliament. In its Preamble the constitution strongly emphasizes Czechoslovakia's role as a Slavic nation and a "People's Democratic Republic." The stress of these two determinant features, so characteristic of most Danubian governments, pervades every provision of the Czech constitution and sets the stage for its immediate application. The Communist-controlled national election resulted in an expected overwhelming approval of the constitution. President Benes, however, was not present at the initiation of Czechoslovakia's Soviet-modeled constitution. Without approving the

new legal document, he resigned in May 1948 and died shortly thereafter. By unanimous vote of Parliament, Klement Gottwald was chosen Benes' successor as third president of Czechoslovakia.

This bloodless and dramatic revolution brought Czechoslovakia into the Russian orbit of consolidation and, like Soviet actions in Hungary and Rumania, strengthened Russia's strategic position. The Communist story that by brilliant tactics Gottwald and his lieutenants quelled a dangerous conspiracy in favor of the Western Powers, seems to be absurd. Dislike of Communism was, of course, strong among the Catholics, the Popular Socialists, and a sizable group of the Social Democrats; this dislike extended to Russia's methods of combating the Marshall Plan. Yet aggressive Communist propaganda against the Marshall Plan and against the alleged attempt of the Anglo-Americans to build up a strong Germany enabled Gottwald to appeal both to class hatred and to national sentiment. The fatal weakness of the Social Democrats gave him the full backing of the workers. Complete control of the police and the country's armed forces accelerated the initial momentum of the uprising. "The Communist coup was, in fact, a spontaneous and quickly organized counterstroke to a legitimate but inept tactical move by the anti-Communist ministers."<sup>16</sup> Because of the innate feebleness of the opposition, the many centrifugal tendencies of the coalition government, and the ruthless tactics of a few well-entrenched Communist leaders, it was soon transformed into a successful revolution.

#### ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND THE TWO-YEAR PLAN

Czechoslovakia's two-year plan, officially introduced on January 1, 1947, is the blueprint for economic planning designed to bring about the country's industrial recovery. Fulfillment of the plan calls for raising the level of industrial production to 110 per cent of the 1937 standard. The project is built around three major objectives. The most significant of these insists on increased economic productivity through the nationalization of industries, while another aims at the thorough modernization of equipment and the improvement of national labor conditions. Finally, a tight control and revision of the country's entire foreign trade structure is embodied in the plan, with the import regulation of essential raw materials and export subsidies of manufactured goods. The two-year plan has faced the tremendous problem of raising the industrial output above the prewar level in a country which suffered six years of continued enemy occupation and lost about 30 per cent of its most highly skilled industrial workers. To counteract these

initial difficulties, an elaborate administrative machinery was established. Three members of the national cabinet were given sweeping authority, including wide emergency powers to mobilize management, capital, and labor in an all-out effort toward recovery. The ministers of commerce, finance, and foreign trade were thus given direct responsibility for carrying out the plan and for the coordination of its various phases. Following the well-established pattern of Soviet bureaucracy, a State Planning Office was set up to take charge of the manifold duties of actual planning while a State Office of Statistics was organized to release information on immediate results and over-all progress of the plan.

The success or failure of this project ultimately depends on the extent of industrial nationalization. The two-year plan envisages the nationalization of 70 per cent of Czechoslovakia's economic potential with special industrial councils, composed of the representatives of government, labor, and management, controlling the major branches of industry. These councils are supposed to work out production schedules of their own, and, on the whole, their legal status resembles that of autonomous corporations. Nationalization extends not only to all of the heavy industries but even to such diverse activities as food processing, grain distribution, dairy farming, and fruit and vegetable raising. In recent announcements the cabinet further enlarged the originally broad scope of socialization. Soviet influence obviously asserted itself at every stage of this program, which met with not unexpected resistance. It is unlikely, however, that private enterprise will ever again play a major role in a country whose government is clearly Communist-dominated. While prime minister, Gottwald stated in the spring of 1948 that his country was a Socialist republic founded on a system of nationalized economy, and not an "old-fashioned bourgeois republic."

One of the immediate results of hasty and often ill-advised nationalization was an impossibly tight manpower situation. The primary means of combating this shortage in Czechoslovakia was to set up labor exchanges where government officials could help to channel workers into the most critical industries. Voluntary measures apparently proved unsuccessful, and finally the National Assembly had to pass a Mobilization of Labor Act, empowering the government to employ, by compulsion if necessary, the workers needed by industry and agriculture. It was officially stated that compulsion would be used against persons "constantly shirking work or engaged in non-essential occupations."

Forced labor, however, was not the means of remedying the catastrophic manpower shortage, which was caused directly by the wholesale expulsion of two minority groups, the Sudeten Germans and the Hungarians who formerly supplied most of the desperately needed skilled workers. In 1947 the Czech government estimated that about 600,000 workers were needed, particularly in such spheres as mining and agriculture. One method of breaking this serious bottleneck would have been further mechanization in the form of more up-to-date machinery in the heavy industrial field. Failure to obtain American credits, which would have then bought much of this equipment in the United States, handicapped Czech industry and the entire two-year plan.

Criticism of the plan emerged at an early stage of postwar reconversion. In the opinion of an independent Prague newspaper, political objectives motivated the manning of several key posts in the administration of the plan and people were appointed who would never have been chosen for economic reasons. Opposition leaders argued that such dangerous political dilettantism must be destroyed in the new Czechoslovakia. Criticism was also directed against the low productivity, the high costs of production, the small export volumes, and the low quality of export goods, for whose excellence the country used to be justly famous before World War II. Supporters of the plan maintained throughout this serious trial period that the two-year plan was an intelligent and practical effort to attain national prosperity. They also claimed that the plan would soon achieve one of its principal objectives, a favorable trade balance based on an expanding export of finished articles and an abundant import of critical raw materials.

These problems could not be solved without the steady help of Western European countries. The economies of Danubian nations are not complementary, and while the Czechs cannot satisfy their own needs of industrial expansion, they get little stimulation from the underindustrialized communities of surrounding countries. This explains the close ties of Czechoslovakia to the West and the gap that exists between economic realities and political orientation. Among the foreign trade partners of Czechoslovakia for 1946 and 1947 the highest exports went to Switzerland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium, and the United States. During the same period the most important suppliers of Czech economy were the United States, Great Britain, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Sweden. In spite of the increasing ideological tension between East and West, for a two-year period postwar

Czechoslovakia succeeded in developing close and intensive trade relations with both British and American import-export firms. As imports from the West far exceeded the volume of goods exported there, a serious dollar shortage plagued Czechoslovakia. According to an official statement of Hubert Ripka, then minister of foreign trade, "the dollar question is as urgent here as it is in other European countries."<sup>17</sup> It was made even more urgent by the United States State Department's action in October 1946 which resulted in the cancellation of \$90,000,000 in actual and potential credits. A minor rapprochement between the two countries took place early in 1947, when the State Department announced completion of a new commercial agreement with Prague. Under this agreement the Czech government approved American trade principles, such as nondiscrimination and tariff reduction, agreeing to give the same consideration in commercial dealings to private enterprise as to government monopolies. The State Department explained that there was no relation between this commercial agreement and the credits canceled at an earlier date.

The desperate dollar shortage accounts for the unanimous enthusiasm with which the Czech cabinet accepted the American invitation to participate in the Marshall Plan and the Paris Conference of July 1947. Under Soviet pressure the Czech government was compelled to change its decision and to withdraw at the last minute from the ranks of nations participating in this promising Western economic project. There was a strong undercurrent of disappointment in Prague over the forced rejection of this invitation. Communist and Socialist party leaders engaged in lengthy speechmaking in order to justify the government's change of front. Although the country has survived so far, in view of her dependence on Western trade a major economic crisis seems inevitable.\*

#### MINORITIES IN POSTWAR CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Along with other Eastern and Central European countries, postwar Czechoslovakia decided to expel certain minority groups. The Sudeten

\* Fears of an impending economic crisis were given concrete expression when the Communist-dominated Prague Parliament approved, in September 1948, a new five-year national plan. Prime Minister Zapotocky stated that the two-year plan had failed to raise Czech living standards and that the five-year plan (1949-1954) was designed to reorganize industry and to increase the standard of living. The entire industrial production schedule was to be altered. Metal production would be increased by 93 per cent and the heavy machine industry output by 300 per cent.

Germans, approximately 3,500,000, and the Hungarians, close to 1,000,000, were the primary subjects of expulsion from the republic. The hasty and frequently arbitrary methods by which these large sectors of the population were uprooted and expatriated caused a great deal of resentment and bitterness and led to serious economic dislocations within the country. The minority question obviously was not handled in an atmosphere of tolerance or understanding. Brief statements by the government are characteristic of the general treatment of nationality issues; they clearly indicate that the government would not negotiate on the subject of minorities and that none of the prewar agreements on the rights of minorities would be valid any longer. This stand reflects Czech popular opinion according to which drastic and decisive solutions would have to be adopted in reply to the explosive and often subversive behavior of prewar minorities.

The overriding problem of the German minority in Bohemia and Moravia has plagued the republic from the onset of its independent existence. By 1920 the Czech national state was fully recognized by the Allied Powers, and the minorities within its frontiers were protected by a new set of international treaties. As a separate group within a *national* state, the Germans of Bohemia felt relegated to the position of second-class citizens, formerly held by the Czechs in the Habsburg empire. Although authorities observed the basic minority treaties more scrupulously than any other Danubian government, in 1938 the Sudeten German grievances were fully exploited by Hitler. Following the ruthless destruction of independent Czechoslovakia, the Nazis established a separate political province for the Germans of Bohemia and Moravia under the name of *Gau Sudetenland*. This arbitrary ethnic product obviously cut across the historic lines of old Czech provinces. The bitterness and humiliation generated by the six-year existence of this wartime *Gau* made it impossible for Czechs and Germans to be welded together again within the same state structure.

By 1945 the government clearly formulated its stand with regard to the future disposition of the German minority, and the final settlement of the Sudeten problem. It insisted on a total expulsion of the Germans from all provinces. The rate of mass expulsion was so fast that by February 1, 1947, there were only about 230,000 Germans left, and the government planned to bring this figure down to 100,000 by the end of the year. Thus ended the centuries-old sojourn of the Germans in Bohemia, and a historic influence suddenly disappeared. The economic consequences of this radical move were serious and probably more dis-

treassing than President Benes and the government originally anticipated. The loss of nearly 1,000,000 highly skilled workers (at least 20 per cent of the Czech labor force) paralyzed several vital industries in the crucial reconstruction period when the widely heralded two-year plan actually went into effect.

A major complicating factor was the problem of filling the visible gap in the country's population. The hasty departure of the Germans left a large vacuum in the northern and western border regions. The obvious finality with which one of the largest mass transfers in European history has been carried out points toward the need of a more satisfactory and lasting solution. The government's intention was to replace the Germans with an almost equal number of Czech citizens. In 1947 this immigration reached the point where a large number of the deported Germans were replaced by Czechs. The newly settled population was brought in from many parts of the country. Interestingly, a small minority included even Hungarians from southern Slovakia, who were considered safer near the borders of Germany in the northwestern part of Czechoslovakia than in the south, next to the Hungarian frontier. This large-scale reshuffling of the population made it necessary for *approximately every fourth family in the country* to resettle, frequently at great distance from its original home. The compulsory mass exodus led to deplorable economic results. To date few of the farms, shops, and industries have been returned to efficient operation, and, despite the efforts of the minister of agriculture, only the best farms of the former Sudeten region are being cultivated. Although the absence of skilled industrial labor is felt keenly, Czechoslovakia is apparently willing to pay for the privilege of becoming a state of Czechs and Slovaks.

The most disruptive minority issue arose directly out of the treaty settlements following World War II. The sharp initial disagreement between the governments of Czechoslovakia and Hungary quickly assumed all appearances of a full-fledged conflict. According to the treaty provisions, the two governments were directed to sign a bilateral agreement on the disposition of about 200,000 Hungarians, constituting one of the largest, most compact minority groups. This group was supposed to be sent to Hungary in exchange for an equal number of Slovaks, who would be resettled in the southern regions of Czechoslovakia. Like previous attempts at large-scale transfers of population groups, this treaty arrangement headed toward failure and keen disappointment; bitterness arising out of the frustration of the population ex-

change agreement has created one of the most anger- and hate-saturated frontier situations in Europe. Even after an official Population Exchange Administration was set up, only about 100,000 people registered for repatriation, which was to have been completed within six months after September 1, 1946. In the meantime the expulsion of the Magyars from Slovakia and their removal to Bohemia and Moravia were carried on under a compulsory labor decree. This Czech presidential decree provided for deportations and for the compulsory direction or movement of labor in the country. The Czech-Hungarian agreement of February 26, 1946, signed in Prague, allowed the deportation of Magyars from Slovakia *only in exceptional cases* and within the scope of the presidential decree. These operations created an unhappy situation of intense agitation and mutual complaints which hampered post-war cooperation between the Czech and Hungarian governments. Even Hungarian Communists protested the Czech attempts to reduce a large percentage of the Hungarian minority to statelessness and destitution by means of expulsion or re-Slovakization. Hungarian protests, in turn, created a great deal of bitterness in Slovakia, which was most directly involved in the process of population exchange. In the absence of intervention on the part of the Great Powers this minority conflict was allowed to assume disturbing proportions and was actually given a new lease on life at the Paris Peace Conference, which simply decided to refer to the two governments concerned the Czech demand for the transfer of 200,000 Hungarians. The theoretical agreement that the two countries carry out the exchange of their minorities on an even, head-for-head basis was not followed in practice. One of the major handicapping factors was the extreme reluctance of Hungarian authorities either to open the border to their compatriots leaving Slovakia, or to allow a substantial number of their Slovaks to depart. The Czech government ascribed this unwillingness to renewed revisionist intentions of the Hungarians. In the careful report of a Western observer, "Slovak officials are quite convinced that Budapest wants to find the excuse some day to recapture all of Slovakia and incorporate it in a new and greater Hungary."<sup>18</sup> Hungarian leaders, on the other hand, have rejected the inhuman methods used in uprooting the wretched inhabitants of this frontier region. The problem is aggravated by the firm and final decision of the Czechs to liquidate, along with the troublesome German sector, most of the Magyar minority in the south. The Hungarians of Slovakia, who were thoroughly assimilated into the economic and political structure of the Czech Republic, have found



it almost impossible to readjust themselves elsewhere. The issue might well develop into a major threat to Danubian peace if the former allies of World War II decide to take opposite sides. The Soviet government has committed itself to support the full Czechoslovak demands. The two Western Powers, anxious to refer the problem back to regional bilateral negotiations, have merely postponed and not solved this potentially dangerous minority conflict.

The transformation of Czechoslovakia into a national state, through the partial settlement of these two minority issues, definitely altered the basic relationship of Czech and Slovaks. It is necessary to consider here the common background and historical links between the two peoples. Slovakia had formed part of the Moravian empire of the ninth century. It had been conquered by the Magyars and had remained part of Hungary until the end of World War I. It is amazing that through a millennium the Slovaks preserved their own language and their racial identity, particularly as the Hungarians fought every expression of Slovak nationalism. The dissolution of the Dual Monarchy suddenly projected the Slovak dilemma onto the stage of Central European politics. While the Slovaks did not want to be absorbed by the Czech provinces, they could not remain separate, for Slovakia was too small and poor to form an independent state. A union of Czechs and Slovaks seemed to be the only reasonable solution of the problem, and such a union was officially declared in June 1918. In spite of the early constitutional guarantees given Slovakia, the Czechs never really appreciated the strength of Slovak nationalist feelings.

The Czech viewpoint was forcefully expressed by a high-ranking member of the national cabinet who in May 1947 unequivocally stated: "The liberty of the Czechs and Slovaks is indivisible. *Slovak freedom can only be guaranteed if there is a Czecho-Slovak Republic.*"<sup>19\*</sup> As soon as other minority groups were substantially eliminated from the postwar body politic, the Czech-Slovak controversy suddenly emerged as a threatening issue, displaying some of its earlier historic violence. The crisis was precipitated by the political purges of several Slovak parties which reputedly harbored separatist elements.<sup>†</sup> The Slovak standpoint was fully crystallized during the stormy year 1947, when several Slovak politicians forcefully claimed that the relations between the two national elements were too unsatisfactory to be carried on any longer. In their opinion an independent provincial status and a thoroughly re-

\* Italics mine.

† Discussed above, cf. pages 83-86.

formed legislative and executive system would have to be accorded Slovakia within the framework of a new constitution. The establishment of a broad Slovak National Council was advocated as a body presiding over the entire field of Slovak provincial administration, completely independent of the Czech national government.<sup>20</sup> Western students of this sensitive nationality problem readily agree that on *at least* one major point the will of the Slovak people should be expressed without fear of external pressure. A plebiscite should decide whether or not the inhabitants wish to be joined with Bohemia and Moravia in a permanent unitary state structure. If the vote is then for union with the Czechs, there should be a constitutional guarantee of wide powers of autonomy to the Slovaks within the new state. By the middle of 1948 it seemed clear that Slovak leaders could be persuaded to cooperate with the Czechs only on a basis of full and equal partnership.

#### MUNICH AND ITS AFTERMATH

The evolution of Czechoslovakia's postwar foreign policies reflects the main political currents of recent years. In a Europe which had just emerged from long and bitter conflict, Czechoslovakia became a country of crucial importance, partly because of her own complex constitutional structure and partly because of her exposed strategic position. Bismarck once stated that a country which controlled Bohemia controlled Europe. Czechoslovakia, a prominent geographic and political corridor in the center of Europe, is even more the key to Europe today than was Bohemia in the time of Bismarck. Dominated by Germany, it enabled that country to checkmate Poland and gain easy access to Russia. Completely dominated by the Soviet, it now opens a passage to Germany and all of Western Europe. This precariously balanced power position is responsible for most of the disturbing developments in Czech foreign affairs. In the interwar period Czechoslovakia became a major obstacle to German ambitions of controlling Central and Southeastern Europe. Today her foreign policies are so closely tied to Russia that the country is well past the "obstacle" stage in Soviet expansionist designs. She actually serves as the all-important northern pivot in the Soviet's strategic control of the entire Danube Valley. Czechoslovakia has become the faithful partner of Soviet Russia and a reliable satellite within the broad new Slavic bloc.

This foreign political orientation is, in many ways, a direct consequence of the disastrous Munich Conference of September 1938. The bitterness of the Czechs over their country's one-sided and greedy dis-

membership has not abated with the end of military operations in Danubian Europe. They cannot easily forget that Bohemia and Moravia were thrown to the "German wolves," that Ruthenia and much of Slovakia were restored to the blessings of Magyarization, and that they themselves were deprived of all their strategic alliances on the Danube. The fears and deep-seated suspicions of another Munich, again to be staged by Western Powers, have given the Czechs a certain anti-British and anti-French bias which, added to the deterioration of diplomatic relations, has slowed down all rapprochement toward the West. The obsession over Munich was definitely coupled with the fearful premonition that such a crisis was possible again in the near future.

Munich-inspired and pro-Soviet trends were clearly noticeable in the wartime diplomacy of the Czech government in exile. The hands of the British and American governments were tied to some extent by the action of the Soviet Union, which, coming into the war in June 1941, wasted no time in recognizing the Czech government in London. Yet the struggle to gain Allied cooperation was not finally completed until the United States extended unqualified recognition to the Czechoslovak government on October 28, 1942. The decisive motivating factor of Benes' foreign policy for a restored postwar Czechoslovakia was the government's ability to obtain substantial Russian support. As the first step toward guaranteeing the existence of close ties with the Soviet Union, Benes reshaped his policy in order to make Russia the mainstay of Czech security. During the early years of the war Benes had concentrated on developing a federation in Eastern Europe as a strong bulwark against a new German onslaught toward the East. However, as soon as Russian military successes increased on the eastern front and the Nazis were halted at Stalingrad during the winter of 1942-1943, Benes abandoned his plan of an Eastern European federation. Instead, on December 12, 1943, he signed an alliance with Russia which substituted the Soviet Union for the smaller neighboring states as Czechoslovakia's guardian in the east against future German resurgence. The alliance treaty guaranteed Czech independence without offering full Russian concurrence with Benes' plan for a democratic postwar government. Nevertheless, Czechoslovakia became the full ally of Russia and the first of the Danubian states to adjust itself voluntarily to the powerful new position of the Soviet Union.

After Benes' return, the Czech coalition government of 1945-1947 based its foreign policies on fighting for the annulment of the Munich Agreement and for a drastic reparation of its damaging influence. This

diplomacy was clearly illustrated by official speeches and memoranda which were directed toward the Allied Powers at the Paris Peace Conference of 1946 and in the spring of 1947, during the second round of peace-treaty negotiations. In September 1946 the Czech deputy foreign minister explained to the Peace Conference that "before the war there was a Republic in the heart of Europe which strove to remain faithful to her best traditions. In spite of that, when the fateful hour struck for the Czechoslovak Republic, she was betrayed. . . . For you Munich is only a memory and perhaps one for remorse, but for us Czechs and Slovaks it is a catastrophe which cannot be effaced from the spirit and heart of many a generation to come."<sup>21</sup> And again, in an official memorandum published in Prague, the national government reiterated its firm conviction that the final peace treaty with Germany shall contain "an express annulment of the Munich Agreement and all acts resulting therefrom or linked therewith, and that the Czechoslovak frontiers as they existed in September 1938 shall be recognized."<sup>22</sup> Beyond the immediate territorial issues which emerged in the wake of V-E day, the diplomatic aftereffects of Munich asserted themselves in two different, yet equally obvious, ways. They precipitated a strongly *pro-Soviet*, and simultaneously a decisively *anti-American* orientation in Czech foreign affairs.

Considering the characteristic hesitancy of the Western Powers and the dangerous aggressiveness of neighboring Germany, Czechoslovakia apparently chose the Soviet Union as her only certain and reliable ally. In the Kosice Program of 1945, and again in recent official conferences, the four major political parties agreed on one fundamental principle of diplomacy, the vital necessity of close cooperation with the U.S.S.R. For the Czechs the Soviet Union is not a power whose vast dominion lies largely outside Europe, but a partner-nation which has committed itself to the defense of a new European system east of the Rhine. This conviction and desire to participate in a Russian-inspired, preferably Slavic, bloc is the greatest obstacle to future Anglo-Czech or Czech-American relations. The country's decisive liberation by the Soviet army, rather than by General Patton's forces, was further proof that henceforward Czechoslovakia would have to adapt her policy to the Soviet Union and not to the West. Communists were able to hail the Russians not only as the liberators of Czechoslovakia but also as the real victors of the war, and to attribute sinister motives to the hesitation of General Patton, who actually acted under superior orders. Even well-informed Czechs believed, furthermore, that at the Yalta Confer-

ence of 1945 Great Britain agreed that for *all postwar purposes* Czechoslovakia should belong to the Soviet sphere of influence. Once again the Czechs felt that the Munich pattern of Great-Power diplomacy was unfolded, and the country itself not even consulted in decisions which were taken concerning its liberation and future destinies. Their suspicions were largely confirmed when only the Soviet Union showed any real interest in negotiating an agreement with the postwar republic on the issue of cooperation between the military and civil authorities of the two countries.

Czechoslovakia thus appears to be caught between two sets of foreign policies, positive and aggressive diplomatic moves from the East and a negative policy of withdrawal by the West. It is no longer an American objective to promote political recovery in Danubian Europe. When the war ended, the United States was committed, mainly through its active participation in UNRRA, to assist in the rehabilitation of the newly liberated, war-devastated countries. The first phase of American policies aimed at securing faithful observance of the Yalta Agreement guaranteeing democratic governments and free elections in Eastern-Central Europe. Although this phase was not as complete a failure in Czechoslovakia as in neighboring Poland, Hungary, and Rumania, American diplomats in Prague proved powerless to combat the insistent political chicanery of the local, Russian-supported Communist party. The delicate internal equilibrium, which in her difficult geographical position Czechoslovakia sought to maintain, depended on the preservation of the European balance of power. As the dissensions between East and West became daily more and more apparent, and as Russia's military strength gradually enveloped Central Europe, the national- and security-minded Czechs drew their own conclusions. The Americans were far away; the Soviet Union was on their doorstep. In the eternal struggle between Slavs and Germans, they were forcefully reminded of their own Slavic background. In the event of trouble, they were destined to be on the Soviet's side.

For postwar Czechoslovakia the Marshall Plan developed into a major test case. A country that was not allowed to participate in the plan, despite such sincere popular enthusiasm for a Western *economic* orientation, could no longer be regarded as either free or independent. By the latter part of 1947 the United States State Department considered Czechoslovakia "lost," in the sense that all of her foreign political decisions were made by Moscow and publicized by the Cominform. The second phase of American diplomacy, vigorously expressed

by recent containment policies and "cold war" strategies, shifted the emphasis from a policy of cooperation in regional reconstruction to a determined struggle against the Soviet Union and its Danubian dependencies. With the Prague revolution of February 1948 the broadest bridge between East and West was blown. The Czechs completely and inescapably aligned themselves with the Eastern bloc, conforming to its essentially Communist ideology and institutions. Much to the dismay of her American friends, Czechoslovakia's foreign policy now fully exemplifies a Slav predominance and a unity with the commonwealth of Sovietized states of the Eastern type, surrounding the U.S.S.R.

### NOTES TO CHAPTER III

1. At first it seemed that Ruthenia would return to Czechoslovakia, but the Red Army was received with great enthusiasm and simultaneously the Czech government had trouble restoring its authority in this area. The question was brought up for final settlement after the return of the Czech government to Prague. On June 29, 1945 Prime Minister Fierlinger signed a treaty in Moscow by which the Carpathian Ukraine was transferred in its entirety to the Soviet Union. The principal clause of the agreement stated that "Sub-Carpathian Russia is again uniting, in conformity with the desire expressed by the population and on the basis of the amicable agreement reached between the two contracting parties, with its ancient motherland, the Ukraine."
2. Malbone W. Graham, "Constitutional and Political Structure," in *Czechoslovakia, Twenty Years of Independence* (Berkeley, 1940), Chap. VII, p. 119.
3. Eduard Táborsky, *Czechoslovak Democracy at Work* (London, 1945), p. 24 *et seq.*
4. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
5. R. R. Betts, "Some Weeks in Czechoslovakia," *The Central European Observer*, July 11, 1947, p. 195.
6. Hugh Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe between the Wars, 1918-1941*, p. 174.
7. These interesting maneuvers are briefly described by Joseph Kodicek in "A Country at the Crossroads," *The Central European Observer*, June 7, 1946, p. 178 *et seq.*, and by Táborsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-159. Táborsky rightly observes that this proposal, "a novelty in constitutional practice, was first made by Dr. Benes in his *Democracy Today and Tomorrow*."
8. Editorial in the *Rude Pravo* (Prague), May 25, 1947.
9. First reported in *East Europe* (London), June 11, 1947, pp. 9-10.
10. "Czechoslovakia Revisited," *The World Today*, Jan. 1947, pp. 16-17; also

mentioned in *Új Magyarország* (Budapest), Feb. 15, 1947, p. 8., under the heading "Domestic Political Tensions in Czechoslovakia."

11. The purges and their political impact are authoritatively analyzed by Joseph Kudiček in "The Slovak Problem," *The Central European Observer*, June 27, 1947, pp. 177-178.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 177.
13. Reported in *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Dec. 5, 1946, p. 8, under the heading *A Press-suit in Czechoslovakia*.
14. Official statement of President Eduard Benes, published by the Czech Ministry of Information in Prague, on February 27, 1948.
15. In mid-April of 1948 the disclosure was made that the Slovak section of the Social Democratic party had already announced its dissolution and instructed its members to enter the Communist party. The event demonstrated that "unification" of the Social Democratic and Communist parties, which was formally voted on by the executive committee of the Social Democrats, has been decided. The Social Democratic party would be absorbed into the Czechoslovak Communist party. Cf. Albion Ross, "Red Czech Charter Sets New 'Rights,'" *The New York Times*, April 14, 1948.
16. Robert B. Lockhart, "The Czechoslovak Revolution," *Foreign Affairs*, July 1948, p. 641 *et seq.* Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart's excellent article offers a detailed and authoritative account of the February 1948 developments in Prague. The author's principal conclusion is summarized in the following statement: "Given that the revolution was the accidental result of the opposition's initiative—and I think that this is the correct interpretation of events—it follows that Russia neither instigated the action nor chose the moment, although doubtless she could have forced the issue in one form or another whenever she desired."—*Ibid.*, p. 644.
17. Hubert Ripka, "Foreign Trade and the Two-Year Plan," *The Central European Observer*, March 7, 1947, p. 49.
18. Albion Ross, "Slovaks Suspect Hungary's Tactics," *The New York Times*, Nov. 10, 1946.
19. Czech Minorities, *East Europe*, June 18, 1947.
20. These firm demands were officially submitted to the Czech government by Dr. Lettrich, chairman of the Slovak National Council, in June 1947. For full text, cf. *East Europe*, June 3, 1947.
21. "The Hungarian-Slovak Frontier," *The World Today*, March 1947, p. 126. A similar conception of Munich is discussed in "Czechoslovakia's Peace Claims," *The World Today*, May 1947, pp. 226-228.
22. *The Czechoslovak Weekly* (London), Jan. 26, 1947.

## IV • Hungary

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For over ten centuries the fertile basin surrounded by the Carpathian mountains has been the scene of Hungarian life. The Magyars arrived here from the vast, nomadic world of Central Asia, where they belonged to the Finno-Ugric family of peoples. During their arduous westward trek the original Magyars mingled with Turkish and Bulgarian tribes who left a strong and lasting imprint on them. The Hungarians of today present an ethnic combination of these distinct influences, and their language is enriched with Turkish and Slavic overtones while retaining its basically Finno-Ugric characteristics. This unusual ethnic and linguistic background has been a significant factor in Danubian history, for it set the Magyars apart from other peoples and created tangible cultural barriers separating them from neighboring Slavic and German nations. It also accounts for the long periods of political instability when the Hungarian people either struggled against alien invaders or coerced other, less aggressive ethnic groups to submit to their empire-building impulse.

Hungarian history is a curious mixture of brightness and shadow. The first ruling dynasty, the Árpáds (1000-1301), succeeded in establishing a Christian kingdom and in staking out solid political boundaries for their semi-nomadic people, still plagued by the wanderlust of open Asiatic steppes. The next two centuries witnessed the emergence of Hungary as a full-fledged Renaissance power, controlling at various times Poland, Bohemia, and large sectors of the Balkan Peninsula. This era also brought the deadly menace of Turkish invasions which culminated in the battle of Mohács in 1526. The disastrous annihilation of Hungarian armies marked the beginning of almost two hundred years of Turkish domination, with its oppressive, tyrannical rule, characteristic administrative confusion, and constant military friction between the powerful Turks and weakling Habsburg emperors. The barbarous



depopulation policies of successive Turkish regimes thinned out Hungary's inhabitants and created disturbing vacuums in several parts of the country. The uprooting of entire peoples and their forced resettlement in distant provinces contributed to the first appearance of large-scale minorities and complex nationality issues which have marked the Danube Valley ever since as one of the most perplexing conflict zones in Europe.

Liberation from the Turkish yoke came in 1711, and the ensuing century and a half fulfilled the essential function of a period of national reconstruction. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Hungary's population was scarcely more than two and a half million; the small size and incredible poverty of the nation suggested the extent of the devastation wrought by Turkish occupation. An era of slow, but steady economic development followed. Political progress was hampered by reactionary Habsburg rulers who refused to grant the sweeping legal and social reforms needed to break down an antiquated system of medieval feudalism. After the abortive Hungarian revolution of 1848, suppressed with the aid of Russian arms, the deep-seated conflict between Austrians and Hungarians became one of the most disruptive issues in the Danube Valley. A Dual Monarchy was established in 1867 as the result of a constitutional compromise between the two nations. In spite of the sincere efforts of liberal statesmen on both sides, this tenuous legal structure barely survived the first decade of the twentieth century and completely collapsed in 1914.

As one of the defeated Central Powers, Hungary emerged from World War I greatly weakened and thoroughly chastised. After the unsatisfactory union of Austria and Hungary was formally dissolved in 1918, the country embarked on an inauspicious career of independence and self-determination. The Treaty of Trianon, in establishing the geographic and ethnic confines of postwar Hungary, reduced the country to half of its prewar size and deprived it of one third of its nationals, who now became alien minorities. Trianon Hungary, an artificial political creation of less than eight million inhabitants and indefensible new boundaries, lacked the fundamental elements of national viability. It was immersed in a permanent state of economic and administrative bankruptcy which stimulated aggressive irredentist movements. Hungary's political development was fraught with many difficulties; unable to adjust herself to the framework of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, she proved equally incapable of independent statehood in the interwar era of 1919-1939. The serious internal troubles of contemporary Hun-



gary, the Soviet satellite, thus derive directly from the protracted periods of past political instability.

Hungary today is in a more precarious position than any of her Danubian neighbors. Hungarians have not fought heroically for liberation as did the Yugoslavs, nor have they ever enjoyed the political prestige of Czechoslovakia, accumulated through twenty years of democratic experience. Hungary has no oil, no significant trade routes, no vital strategic lines of communication as have Rumania and Bulgaria; no well-defined political boundaries as has Turkey. Hungary also succeeded in antagonizing every important European power in the course of the political and military operations which marked her unhappy participation in World War II. In view of all these strikingly unfavorable developments, Hungary's present-day hopes and future aspirations are of necessity aimed toward a well-consolidated domestic policy, motivated and vitalized by the momentum of radical reform policies.

### CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

On February 1, 1946, an official proclamation by the first democratically elected National Assembly unanimously terminated the 945-year-old Hungarian monarchy and declared Hungary a republic. With the simultaneous emergence of a fairly representative and ideologically broad-minded government, the varied and checkered cycle of Hungarian constitutional development seemed to have entered a new phase. In the brief span of twenty-eight years this country has passively witnessed five basically different phases of political evolution: from monarchy to republic (1918-1919), from a liberal republican form to violent communism (1919), then to varying forms of personal dictatorship (1920-1944), and finally a sudden return to at least a temporarily republican type of government (1944-1946). The interregnum between the two rather tentative and superficial experiments in republicanism and democracy brought nothing to Hungary but military defeats, political immorality, and a thoroughly bankrupt economy.

The exercise of royal power actually ceased in Hungary on November 13, 1918, when King Charles I of the ill-fated Habsburg dynasty voluntarily abdicated. In the ensuing constitutional and political vacuum a republican regime was formed under the leadership of Count Michael Károlyi, a well-known Hungarian liberal. This distinguished but short-lived republican government voluntarily yielded within a few months to a ruthless and extreme Communist dictatorship under Moscow-trained Béla Kun. According to Oscar Jászi's brilliant de-

scription, Béla Kun's "communistic revolution followed a pure Russian world-revolutionary model, with chaotic experiments in socialization, dreams of the *soukhozes*, and occasional hysterical outbursts of terrorism. It was short-lived, but it made a deep impression on Hungary's conservative soul."<sup>1</sup> After the collapse of this disastrous revolution, Nicholas Horthy, a former admiral of the Austro-Hungarian Navy, succeeded in establishing a reactionary and semiparliamentarian system of government. Although Horthy's regime excelled in the misuse of constitutional formalities, a certain political normalization was accomplished under the ten-year tenure of Prime Minister Count Stephen Bethlen. On the other hand, Bethlen's immediate successors, particularly General Julius Gömbös, were responsible for a regression to Hungary's antiquated, pre-World War I system of political and social feudalism. Reaping the full harvest of Hungary's revisionist aspirations, these regimes also helped to pave the way toward a thoroughgoing German orientation of the country, toward an uninhibited economic and political cooperation with National Socialist Germany, and toward a close military alliance with other members of the European Axis. The reactionary, Axis-allied regency of Horthy collapsed in the autumn of 1944 when, following his sudden request to the Red army for an armistice, the admiral resigned and was forced by the Nazi Gestapo to leave the country.

With liberation came the task of restoring the continuity and equilibrium of constitutional life and of basic political institutions. For Hungary the war ended in a complete vacuum of power. When the Red Army occupied the country, the political and administrative organization was disrupted, the remnants of national and local government were dispersed, and the communication system was destroyed. There was no army, no police; the Hungarian Nazis had dissolved all public and political organizations. The population was worn out by the fighting, and frightened by the violence following the victorious advance of a tremendous military and political force. Budapest was still under siege when a new provisional government in Debrecen set about reconstructing the country's political life. In December 1944, elections for a Provisional National Assembly were held in the liberated territories. The new National Assembly swiftly confirmed a Provisional Government, which succeeded in keeping itself in political power for about a year, thus bridging the constitutional gap created by the utter political confusion of the first few "postliberation" months.<sup>2</sup> In 1945 a new electoral law prepared the way for a decisive national election,

assuring the suffrage to every Hungarian citizen over the age of twenty, regardless of education, religion, sex, or social standing. The first election after the liberation of the country was held under the new law and generally conformed with this recent democratic orientation in offering not only a wide franchise but also a choice among six political parties, ranging from Conservative to the ubiquitous Communists. The most significant constitutional step in the establishment of a democracy was undoubtedly the inauguration of a Hungarian republic. A series of conferences held in January 1946 among members of Hungary's leading political parties decided on the abolition of the monarchy and on the establishment of a republic. These decisions were later endorsed by the new Hungarian National Assembly in its first parliamentary sessions. The new law, No. I-1946, on Hungary's Form of Government gives an interesting and forceful background-picture of the new republic.\* According to the Preamble the power of the state rests with the Hungarian people, who exercise their legislative power through the democratically elected National Assembly. The basic document also states that "the republic guarantees to its citizens the natural and inalienable rights of men." On paper this law undeniably contains all elements inherent in a constitutional, republican, representative democracy. In the words of one writer, they sound like the Bill of Rights and the Four Freedoms rolled into one, and include personal freedom, right to a life free from oppression, freedom from fear or want, freedom to express thought and opinion, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly and association; the right to personal property, to personal security, to a job, to a livelihood, to free education; and the right to participate in the life of the state and in local government.

There are no *constitutional* impediments in Hungary to the "free and unfettered" practice of political democracy, although practices have seldom corresponded to legal documents. Governmental powers are satisfactorily outlined in the text of the laws and carefully separated from each other; the National Assembly possesses all legislative power, while executive authority rests with a cabinet of ministers responsible to the Assembly. The president, as head of the republic, is elected for a four-year term and cannot be re-elected to succeed himself. The president's official functions are carefully limited by law and include such powers as the appointment of a prime minister, confirmation of cabinet members, and the appointment of diplomatic envoys. The president has the right of vetoing legislation passed by the Assembly, but if the

\* Cf. Appendix, pages 298-300.

same law is passed again, he is obliged to sign it. He can be impeached by the Assembly for violations of the law or of the Constitution.

These broad constitutional outlines were subsequently limited by restrictive legislation. A governmental decree published in June 1946 provided that the right of supervising political associations shall be exercised by the minister of the interior. Simultaneously a law on the Defense of Hungarian Democracy defined as criminal any incitement against the republican form of government, against a race or religion, against the equality of all citizens, and, in general, any infringement of specific civil liberties. This defense law has since served as the constitutional basis for war-crime trials in Hungary. Its broad provisions were invoked in setting up the juridical procedure for the people's courts and the people's public prosecution of all war crimes against the Hungarian nation. Actually trials of war criminals were started soon after Hungary's liberation was completed. Only the trials of certain major offenders bear any relevance to strictly constitutional or political issues. The trial of Béla Imrédy, former premier heading the impressive list of "criminals against the Nation," focused world-wide attention on the dual problems of individual war guilt and legal responsibility for aiding and participating in Fascist aggression. In an emotionally eloquent indictment speech, public prosecutor Zoltán Horváth clearly stated that the former premier and acknowledged leader of various factions within the notorious "Arrow Cross" movement would have to face personal responsibility for many of Hungary's disasters. "From anti-Jewish legislation to the concentration camp of Auschwitz, from the anti-Comintern to the ruined bridges of Budapest, from economic surrender to the complete plunder and eventual ruination of the country, there is a single straight line connecting the two terminal dates, 1938 and 1945. Imrédy was the prime instigator, self-appointed apostle and legislator, the most insistent advocate of all these political moves."<sup>3</sup> Other war-crime trials followed in the footsteps of the Imrédy case. Most fascist leaders of prewar Hungary were sentenced to death by unanimous verdicts of the courts. Only recently was the death sentence of András Tasnádi-Nagy revised by the court of appeal and changed to a life sentence. Tasnádi-Nagy was the president of the lower house of Parliament, a former minister of justice who served in various cabinets between 1939 and 1945, particularly in the Sztójay Cabinet of 1944. He was also president of the Parliament under the Hungarian National Socialists, whom he eventually followed to western Hungary and to Austria in their last-minute flight.

For over a year the people's courts were kept busy sentencing individual political leaders who played prominent roles in Hungary's most reactionary period. Former cabinet members, public servants, diplomatic representatives, and newspapermen were purged in a continuous flow of swift and efficient trials. While public opinion generally accepted the constitutional and political necessity of liquidating such prime war criminals as Imrédy and Foreign Minister László Bárdossy, a quiet resentment, a mute opposition developed against the interminable series of war trials. Critics of the coalition government contended that the purge of war criminals was originally conceived of and carried out in the spirit of a sincere and desirable political movement, but gradually degenerated into a sinister judicial farce where the cry for fresh victims seemed inexhaustible. The purge of the public services was scarcely completed when the demand was raised for new large-scale dismissals. Recent guilt trials have increasingly reflected the eminently vindictive, purely partisan motivation of Hungary's new ruler, the Communist party, whose leaders have never hesitated to bare their extreme ideological bias, turning it offensively and indiscriminately against the champions of alleged political or economic reaction.

### PREWAR POLITICAL PARTIES

Partisan politics in prewar Hungary were determined largely by an electoral law which called for secret ballot in the towns, but for open voting in the countryside. By this means the agrarian masses were completely disfranchised, and the government was assured of a safe majority in national elections. The composition of Parliament generally reflected this unsatisfactory state of affairs. The ruling regime was represented by the government party, which was mostly a colorful collection of individuals selected on personal grounds of proven loyalty and usefulness to members of the cabinet. For this reason there seldom were dissidents in the party, which could rely on a solid bloc of 150 to 200 votes in the lower house of Parliament, itself a rather shallow embodiment of ancient Hungarian political traditions.

Parliamentary opposition was confined to two small groups. Of these the Liberal party was more forceful; it consistently followed the leadership of Charles Rassay, a distinguished political writer and public figure. This group lived up to its name quite adequately and was supported by democratic sectors of the urban intelligentsia. From Bethlen through to the notorious Imrédy period, the highly qualified representatives of this group displayed a firm, unwavering line of opposition

to the varying forms of thinly veiled dictatorship. As reactionary pressures tightened in the late thirties, the Rassay group was gradually deprived of its parliamentary seats until only one or two Liberals were able to raise their voice in token opposition. Social Democrats formed the second party of opposition. Its major weakness stemmed from the narrow-minded rural feudalism which simply closed the villages and peasant districts to forces of political opposition. The Social Democrats were thus forced to campaign exclusively in the cities, preaching to industrial workers and to the lower middle class. They survived the barren prewar years by accepting the compromise condition of leaving the peasants alone. Once this requirement was complied with, they were free to expand their political energies in urban centers, where they came to dominate the trade unions and generally established a strong position. Their success was due largely to well-disciplined tactical leadership and to the publication of popular newspapers and magazines in Budapest.

This simple parliamentary picture was considerably upset by the last prewar national election, held in May 1939. As the forerunner of complete German domination a startlingly large group of Hungarian Nazi deputies appeared in Parliament, most of them members of the extremist Arrow Cross movement. These deputies were the equivalents of Henlein's Sudeten German party in Czechoslovakia and played the same disruptive role, leading to the enslavement of their home country. Although the Arrow Cross movement split up into several small, squabbling groups, the individual factions were all too generously represented in public life. The only note of last-minute moderation was injected by the appearance of a group of young writers who described themselves as "village explorers," or members of the March Front, in memory of the short-lived revolution of March 1848.\* Members of the March Front devoted themselves to an earnest study of the problems of Hungarian village life and advocated far-reaching social reforms. They quickly exposed as a cheap and dishonest political maneuver the agitation of the Arrow Cross for a new land reform. Although this party group appeared much too late on the scene of prewar politics, its intense liberalism and sincere social convictions had an electrifying effect on public opinion by probing into the lamentable condition of millions of Hungarians.

\* For a discussion of their social reform program, cf. "The Problem of Peasant Parties," in Chapter II, pages 47-48.



## POSTWAR PARTIES AND DOMESTIC POLITICS

The composition of the first postwar coalition government corresponded roughly to the results of the country's postliberation election. The number of votes cast reached almost 5,000,000; of these, the Smallholders' party polled well over 2,500,000, while the combined votes cast for the Communist and Social Democratic parties barely exceeded 1,500,000. Obviously, the elections of November 1945 inflicted an undisguised and significant defeat upon the two extreme leftist parties, particularly on the Communists, while temporarily assuring the middle-of-the-road Smallholders' party of a decisive governmental majority. The Smallholders' victory was most overwhelming in Budapest, where the ratio of Communist votes was even lower than in the rest of the country. The new coalition government was built around nine members of the Smallholders' party and four members each of the Social Democratic and Communist parties.

Several unexpected political developments were in startling contrast to this first chapter of democratic renaissance. The constitutional significance of national elections was considerably deflated by the pre-election agreement of the three major political parties to continue their coalition *regardless of the results of these popular elections*. This partisan political maneuver displayed a strange imperviousness to the ballot and a disappointingly autocratic appraisal of the role of national elections in parliamentary forms of government. According to its official interpretation, the agreement "was absolutely necessary to maintain national unity. There were such serious problems to be solved that none of the parties could attempt to undertake the task alone. For this reason, . . . the major parties of the Hungarian Independence Front have agreed to maintain the coalition government after the elections. Their unity was also characterized by the fact that discussions about the formation of the coalition Government began on the day of the elections."<sup>4</sup> This somewhat prematurely formed government was under the titular leadership of Zoltán Tildy of the majority Smallholders' party, but in reality the reins of power were tightly controlled by two new political leaders. Through a flexible "general staff" arrangement which permitted them to become deputy prime ministers without portfolio, Árpád Szakasits of the Social Democratic and Mátyás Rákosi of the Communist party have wielded the decisive balance of power in the cabinet ever since the formally correct but politically meaningless national elections of November, 1945. The power relationships did not

alter noticeably when Zoltán Tildy was elected president of the new republic and his post was taken by Ferenc Nagy, former president of the National Assembly and a colorless and conservative member of the same Smallholders' party. After several sharp political reversals, Nagy himself was forced out of the government and fled to the United States for political refuge.

Most of the left-wing peasant leaders who survived the years of Nazi terror have now joined forces with the Social Democrats and the Communists. When the first postliberation government was formed in Debrecen in 1944, the young and intellectually alert group of "village explorers" combined in a promising new National Peasant party. Although the Communists encouraged this group, the results of the national elections in 1945 did not justify early hopes. Revolutionary-minded peasants voted for the Communists, while the vast majority of village and farm voters chose the more conservative Smallholders. Thus the Peasant party has been given mere ceremonial recognition in the coalition government; it has only one member in the cabinet and a small and subdued group of twenty-three representatives in the National Assembly.

What is the nature and political program of the Smallholders' party? Founded in 1930 as an opposition group to Horthy's "semiparliamentarian" regime, this party has always relied on the support of certain broad segments of the population, such as a conservative agrarian class and the more liberal urban intellectuals. In its original postwar composition, the group was primarily a bourgeois and middle-class bloc cemented together by the obvious reluctance of its members to accept the ideas, men, or slogans of either the extreme Left or the extreme Right. "It should not be forgotten," observes Oscar Jászi, "that the Smallholders' Party is not reactionary, nor even conservative; it is a progressive party in favor of social and cultural reforms."<sup>5</sup> For the period of 1945-1947 it represented the conservative-democratic interests of the country and achieved temporary success because of a decidedly mixed membership, ranging in its elements from "progressivism" to "reaction." To retain an internal political balance, it firmly believed in tolerance and consistently preached moderation. The Social Democratic party originally assumed the role of bridging the gap between Left and Right, thus helping to stabilize and unify the divergent elements of political leadership. Nothing could be more vital for the future of Hungary, particularly in domestic politics, than the maintenance of a strong center, progressive but not violent, popular without being

extremist. The Socialist members of the coalition cabinet in the beginning ably performed the role of economic and political mediation. They held the portfolios of Justice, Industry, and Commerce, effectively balancing well-entrenched Communist power, as manifested in the key posts of the ministries of the Interior, Popular Welfare, and Communications.

Recently, however, a significant shift of political positions occurred, upsetting the precarious equilibrium of domestic politics. The thirty-sixth annual Congress of the Social Democratic party, meeting in Budapest in February 1947, ended with a widely publicized and spectacular victory of its extreme left-wing leaders over the more conservative right-wing members, who seemed to have been completely discredited. This bitter discord within the party was merely the climax of a long process of disagreement within an ever-widening area of political misunderstanding and intolerance. The final outcome of the Social Democratic Congress was a dramatic decision of the party leadership to liquidate its moderate members and to integrate its activities with those of the Communist party. For all practical purposes the Social Democratic party thus ceased to exist independently and entered the uncertain path of cooperation with the Communists.

The new coalition of the Left had several aggressive champions. Vice Prime Minister Árpád Szakasits, a fairly experienced and flexible politician who clearly dominated his less astute colleagues in the Social Democratic party, forcefully outlined the changed objectives and attitudes of the extreme Left. "As a Party we have decided to participate in reconstruction, break up feudalism, pave the way for nationalization, rebuild the civil administration of the state and wage merciless war against reaction—in any form. . . . The trend of our foreign policy is deeply influenced not only by our geographical proximity but by the obvious recognition that the Soviet Union is the defender of world peace and the friend of all free peoples, the builder of true socialism. Our country can only benefit from a friendly good-neighbor relationship with the Soviet Union. . . . In domestic politics we shall follow a similar course; if there is a change, it will be in a positive direction. Our alliance and cooperation with the Communist Party will be drawn even tighter than it has been in the past."<sup>6</sup>

Even Mátyás Rákosi, official leader of the Communist party, could not have expressed the objectives and aspirations of his own group any better than did Szakasits. Rákosi's own political arguments would be far less convincing without the continued occupation by Soviet troops

and military officials. The core of the Hungarian Communist party is a group of about eighty trained leaders who wield almost all actual political power and direct the daily conduct of the nation's affairs. Most of them have managed to retain their original Soviet citizenship; all of the influential members of the party have spent several years in Moscow, partly because the Horthy government never tolerated their presence in Hungary, partly to complete the process of political indoctrination and education for eventual leadership. Rákosi spent most of the interwar period either in the Soviet Union or in Hungary's jails, which were unusually receptive to Communist leaders on almost any echelon of authority. His first major political role was participation in Béla Kun's ill-fated revolution of 1918-1919. In 1920 he quietly emigrated to Russia, returning to Hungary in 1925 as leader of the illegal Communist party. He was arrested soon after his return and condemned to eight years in prison. When he had completed his first prison term, another suit was filed against him on charges of "uninterrupted revolutionary activities"; this time (January 1937) he was condemned to life imprisonment. Under increasing Soviet pressure the Hungarian government finally released him, and in 1940 exchanged him for several Hungarian agents held in the prisons of Soviet Russia. Rákosi again returned to Hungary in January 1945, as official leader and secretary general of the Hungarian Communist party. Since November 1945 he has been a member of the government as one of the two vice prime ministers.

For the past three years Rákosi has been the guiding power and top policy maker of the Communist party. Until the recent conspiracies and crises in domestic politics, his attitude was one of conciliation and of professed belief in the coalition government. If statements of Communist leaders can be taken at their face value, Rákosi's group was apparently not intent on establishing a sweeping or exclusive political control of the country's domestic life—at least not during an initial period of postwar reconstruction fraught with its own particular brand of difficulties. Even as late as June 1946, Rákosi emphatically declared that his party did not aim at dictatorship but at "effective collaboration in a concentration of national forces." This statement implied the tactical decision of a continuing participation in the three-party coalition. The Communists thus refrained for a while from openly splitting political life into a crippling tug of war between a weak government and a formidable opposition. The primary objectives of Hungary's reconstruction (land reform, currency stabilization, gradual nationalization)

were for the greater part achieved in this period of interparty truce conceived in an atmosphere of ideological moderation.

By the winter of 1946 the blueprint of Communist party tactics revealed a drastic change in political attitudes. A second phase of *Gleichschaltung* activities was launched coincident with the slow withdrawal of Red Army occupation troops, the signing of satellite peace treaties, and a slight increase in political interest and economic pressure from the West. The ultimate purpose of this latter phase was clear to all interested observers, particularly as the shaky foundations of the coalition government, built on a tenuous layer of last-minute political compromises, collapsed almost immediately under their own weight. The history of this collapse is closely interwoven with the disheartening progress and decisive liquidation of several conspiracies.

In January and February 1947 several hundred persons were suddenly arrested by the police. The ministry of the interior claimed that a large-scale and secret conspiracy was under way with the object of restoring the rule of Nicholas Horthy, who had fled the country in October 1944. The conspirators were accused of wanting to establish their own government, drawing largely on personnel associated with Horthy's regime. To achieve this, they organized the secret Hungarian Unity Society (*Magyar Közösség*), which was controlled by two small groups of the counterrevolutionary *élite*, a political Committee of Seven and a Military Commission of Six. The discovery of this conspiracy and the ensuing purge were carefully timed so as to remove certain potentially dangerous anti-Communist elements before the Soviet Army would have to leave the country. According to the terms of the peace treaty, now officially signed and accepted, ninety days after ratification all Soviet troops except for a few units guarding the lines of communication between Russia and Austria were to be withdrawn from Hungary.

The purge of "reactionary plotters" was directed against two definite groups in Hungary's public life, the army and the Smallholders' party. It first intended to remove a few high-ranking army leaders in order to streamline the remaining meager armed forces of the country. The army would thus be rescreened into a highly reliable pro-Communist force under the leadership of such extreme Communists as General Pálffy, who has been the real power in the ministry of war ever since its first reorganization by the coalition government. It is interesting to note that among the first few persons arrested in this "rightist-reactionary conspiracy against the state" were many of the chief protagonists

of the Hungarian-Soviet armistice negotiations of 1944-1945, men who had spent several months in Moscow preparatory to the final surrender of Hungary. Their arrests were carried out by the Communist-controlled political department of the war ministry, an organization which played a notorious role throughout the liquidation of the conspiracy. The army leader most seriously implicated was Major General Lajos Dálnoki-Veress, who apparently served as head of the Hungarian Unity Society, central organ of the conspiracy. General Veress had also attempted to surrender to the Red Army in 1944, but was arrested first by the Hungarian Nazis, then by the Germans, was subsequently court-martialed, sentenced to death, then pardoned and given a life sentence. He was finally liberated from jail by the advancing Red Army and played a significant role in reorganizing the war ministry. When the conspiracy was unmasked, the political department of the war ministry used his "full confession" to complete the list of suspects; within a few days it arrested well over one hundred "fascist criminals," all members of the secret Hungarian Unity Society and six of them deputies of the Smallholders' party.<sup>7</sup> The first reports stated that the occupation authorities of Soviet Russia could do this legally under the armistice terms governing the postwar status of Hungary. Although there were numerous references to the law on the Protection of Democratic Order in Hungary as the judicial basis for these indictments, it cannot be denied that the parliamentary immunity of these deputies was flagrantly violated, that a new *political police* took over from the regular Hungarian police, and finally that the Russian authorities took "matters into their own hands," silencing people by the simple device of labeling them as Fascists. These moves fully justified the British editorial remark that "the timely 'discovery' of this plot was a warning to all that the Communists would go to all lengths." These arrests precipitated a full-fledged crisis in the Hungarian government, eliminating even the semblance of interparty cooperation and understanding. Leaders of the Left, particularly Mátyás Rákosi, demanded a severe and thoroughgoing purge of the Smallholders' party, which was allegedly harboring dangerous reactionary elements, and was gravely compromised by the plot. While the two leftist parties were drawn even closer by the conspiracy and thus presented an inexorably united front, the leaders of the Smallholders' party suddenly weakened, hesitated, and embarked on a new, self-destructive course of appeasement policies. The arrests were in the nature of a test case; the party that had won a

substantial electoral majority in November 1945 displayed no political acumen and was unable to defend itself. Although the purges were planned without their knowledge, Premier Ferenc Nagy and his colleagues of the Smallholders' party considered it better to permit their parliamentary followers to be arrested than to challenge well-entrenched Communist power.<sup>8</sup>

The conciliatory attitude of the leadership of the Smallholders' party elicited even more determined and bitter denunciations by the leftist groups. According to József Révay, editor of the Communist daily, *Szabad Nép*, secretly intercepted messages clearly proved that the conspiracy aimed at working hand-in-hand with anti-Democratic organizations outside Hungary. Leaders of the Communist ministry of the interior underscored the significance of these remarks by emphasizing that the Communists would now *turn against all political opposition in Hungary*, calling for relentless energy and thorough investigation in cleaning up the conspiracy. The police, they stated, was on the side of the working classes and "it is not to be imagined that while the Russians are in the Danube valley, Hungarian workers and peasants could be divested of the rights they have won through the advance of the Russian Army." As Communists and Socialists continued to tighten control over the government, the weeding out of antidemocratic factions involved primarily three important cabinet ministries: Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, and Reconstruction. Again the most prominent victims proved to be members of the Smallholders' party. First Hungary's new political police arrested Endre Mistéth, minister of reconstruction and labor; his imprisonment led to further demands by the Ministry of Interior, which insisted that one of the more prominent anti-Communist members, Béla Kovács, secretary of the Smallholders' party, be arrested. In Kovács' case all previous and "unnecessary" formalities were neglected; he was summarily jailed by Soviet occupation authorities on a set of charges including espionage against the Soviet Army, terrorism against the Russian occupation forces, and participation in the formation of armed anti-Soviet groups.

Shortly after these arrests, Vice Premier Rákosi demanded a national election, a new popular mandate to the two workers' parties by which Hungary's achievements could effectively be insured and decisive steps be taken in the fight of progressivism against feudalism. The Social Democratic party fully supported Communist demands throughout these revolutionary developments. Giving a new and more flexible

definition of democracy in Hungary, Árpád Szakasits explained at a Communist-Socialist rally that the government could no longer be based on "mere arithmetical illusions." He argued that the "unnatural" electoral victory of the Smallholders could not form the basis of political rights. "We have always demanded a thorough purge of the Smallholders' party, and told its leaders *to abandon arithmetical illusions. We urged them to allow only peasants and other honest people to speak in their councils.*"<sup>9\*</sup>

At this stage of developments Western public opinion began to show interest in Hungary's first major postwar crisis, symbolic of the deepening rift between East and West. Secretary of State George C. Marshall transmitted several strong American protests to the Soviet Union over its recent actions in Hungary. Although these State Department notes were suppressed by the Hungarian government, they were made public in Washington and London. The notes encompassed the full scope of the country's serious internal crisis as they protested the Soviet "attempt to nullify the electoral mandate given by the Hungarian people," criticized the Red army for arresting Kovács, expressed the United States government's "feeling of concern," and finally requested a thorough Soviet-American investigation of the situation. There was no direct reply from the Hungarian government, but in a brief letter to the American representative of the ACC for Hungary, Lieutenant General V. P. Sviridov, Soviet chairman of the Council, rejected the note and categorically stated that the Smallholders' party, its leaders and party members, had all admitted that the party had been involved in the conspiracy. "The conspiracy itself is being investigated by a people's court provided for by the Hungarian Constitution."<sup>10</sup>

A series of further purges obscured the scene of domestic politics in the first half of 1947; they were obviously intended to destroy the ideologically balanced elements of postwar Hungarian politics. A ruthless liquidation of the Smallholders' party and its parliamentary majority contributed not only to a closer cooperation of the parties of the Left, but actually opened the way for a Communist-dominated bloc such as now rules Poland, Rumania, and Bulgaria. While the discovery of abortive right-wing plots was of decisive value to the Communist party, the coalition government which had survived several previous crises was in effect permanently crippled by it. The influence of the Smallholders was considerably reduced by forcing them from one capitulation to another.

\* Italics mine.



## THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS OF 1947

In spite of the ominous events of early 1947, the elections of August 31 did not result in an absolute majority for the Communist party. Undaunted by the ruthless use of police power, large sectors of the Hungarian people voted against the Communists and their way of life. Although the Communist party made full use of its obvious advantages in funds, control of newsprint, and monopoly of transportation, the share of its total vote increased only to a moderate extent, from 17 to 22 per cent. Two of the coalition parties displayed amazing weakness. The Smallholders' party lost most of the electoral mandate and confidence which were so generously given in 1945, its votes being sharply reduced from 57 to 14 per cent. The party had been unable to withstand the attacks of a Marxist minority, with its lack of moral scruples and its Messianic faith in the proletariat. Hence the votes cast for it in 1945 were now divided between the shadowy group of Smallholders who survived the relentless waves of the "Great Purge," and two of its successors on the opposition side.

The latter are relative newcomers in domestic politics. The Democratic People's party, bolstered by 16 per cent of the popular vote, suddenly emerged as the second largest political group; the party's leadership is strongly Catholic and its principal policies closely resemble the Popular Republican Movement (M.R.P.) in France. Its "strong man," István Barankovits, has been especially troublesome for the government in recent denunciations of its domestic and foreign program. Since he built up a considerable popular following among the Catholic peasantry, the Communists first renewed a previous offer to him to join their coalition, then upon his refusal began to "discover" reactionary elements in his party.

The other opposition group of importance was the newly formed Hungarian Independence party, which participated in the elections on the brief but forceful party platform of determined anti-Communism. Polling about 14 per cent of the national vote, it equaled the strength of the rump Smallholders' party and assumed a determined line of parliamentary opposition to the Communist-dominated coalition government. Skillfully piloted by Zoltán Pfeiffer, a well-known lawyer with an excellent anti-Nazi record, this party broke off from the Smallholders to fight the coalition from the outside. Pfeiffer was hated by the Communists both for his integrity and for his ability; few other political statements provoked them to such frenzies of rage and distress

as the "nonpartisan remarks" in his speeches. Cardinal Mindszenty, one of the most popular public figures in Hungary, strongly sympathized with him and gave his party additional weight as one of the few articulate groups in the dwindling camp of the opposition. Shortly after the elections, however, Pfeiffer was reported missing from Parliament in Budapest, having fled to Vienna. The technique applied to Ferenc Nagy and several other Smallholders was again successfully employed by the Communists, who thus removed another opposition leader. Vice Premier Rákosi's statement put a finishing touch to the brief but significant history of Hungary's only Independence party: "There is no need for the existence of Mr. Pfeiffer's party." The anticlimactic accusation by the public prosecutor that Pfeiffer had released several former S.S. (Elite Guard) officers while he was minister of justice surprised no one.

The most interesting feature of Hungarian election results was the reduced vote of the Social Democrats. They owed their comparative defeat to three causes. First, the Communists had undoubtedly assimilated a good fraction of their votes by making full use of "flying voting squads" which helped to intimidate a considerable part of the electorate, coercing them to choose the Communist ticket. The ministry of the interior also admitted to printing half a million nonresidential voting permits and, according to the Socialists, actually falsified the instructions issued on the conduct of the elections. Second, some of the Socialist supporters deserted the party because of its close collaboration with the Communists. Third—this seems to be the most important cause—the Communists skillfully undermined Socialist prestige. Behind the thin façade of a united front, Communist leaders have consistently delegated to the Social Democrats the most unpopular tasks. When the Church had to be approached with a distasteful political measure, the job was detailed to the Socialists. In drives for increased membership, the Communists deliberately sought to attract a representative elite, including aristocrats, scientists, and artists. The Socialists, on the other hand, were advised against admitting anybody of the upper classes or of the bourgeoisie. When, in preparation for the forthcoming national elections, they tried to compete with the flexible Communist standards of admitting new members, they were bitterly accused of conspiring with the middle class. The opportunistic behavior of leading Socialists, like Árpád Szakasits, further enhanced the impression desired by the Communists, and insured the effectiveness of

their tactics based on a mixture of energy and deception.\* The Socialist rank and file was split, and a fairly large number of its least moderate elements gradually joined the Communist party. By 1947 this strategy of "divide and rule" accounted for 1,000,000 votes gained by the Communists, as against the 800,000 votes they received in the national elections of 1945. In spite of such electoral progress, the majority of the people voted for non-Communist representation. Rákosi's party had to achieve its aims by extraconstitutional and violent means. During the stormy months following the elections of August 1947, the Communists showed once more that it was impossible for them to collaborate on any genuine basis. There was no guarantee in the make-up of the Hungarian government that *domination through coalition* could not be conveniently dropped in favor of *total control*.

The Sovietization of Hungary followed the predetermined plan of total *Gleichschaltung*, whose phases are faithfully repeated in one country after another. At the same time that Czechoslovakia was brought to the Hungarian phase of 1947, Hungary took a big step toward the Rumanian phase of ideological development. In March 1948 the Social Democratic party, a force of potential political opposition and national prestige, received a final and decisive purge. A long list of prominent Socialists were forced out of office and, in the spirit of true "workers' unity," compelled to resign from the party. Most of them were accused of advocating the independence of the Socialist party and obstructing the long-heralded merger with the Communists. Following the purge, the thirty-seventh annual Social Democratic Congress voted the party out of existence and decided unanimously to join the new party of Hungarian Workers. A twenty-one-member executive committee was elected to take the necessary political steps leading toward a final fusion. Szakasits supplied a characteristic leitmotiv for the establishment of the Workers' party. He told delegates that the fusion of Socialists and Communists would be forever: "Nothing can separate us any more."<sup>11</sup> The new Workers' Executive Committee, including most of the key cabinet ministers, assumed its arduous duties by sending telegrams of greetings to Premier Stalin, Foreign Minister Molotov, General Markos of the Greek guerrillas, and Pietro Nenni of the Italian Popular Front.

\* In August 1948 Smallholder Zoltán Tildy was forced to resign the presidency of Hungary. As a reward for his varied services, belligerently pro-Communist Szakasits became the second president of the postwar Republic.

## PRESS AND PROPAGANDA

Closely following the pattern of internal political developments, the trend of Hungarian newspaper writing has shifted considerably in the past two years. Today the Communist and Social Democratic press dominates the scene, displacing both in volume and in political intensity the more moderate type of journalism characteristic of the immediate postliberation period. The full impact of the political purges and the merger with Communists is clearly shown in writings of the Social Democrats. Publications of this political group tend to be extremely pro-Soviet, continually stressing the close alliance between the Soviet Union and Hungary, and the friendly and cordial relations between the merged Communist and Social Democratic parties. The Social Democratic daily, *Világosság*, is a storehouse of interesting and pertinent political information. Until recently one of the most colorful veterans of the Hungarian labor movement, Anna Kéthly, a respected and widely known old-line Socialist, served both as editor of *Világosság* and as vice president of the lower house of Parliament.\* Issues of the paper have given complete accounts of the joint sessions of Communists and Social Democrats under the auspices of the two vice prime ministers, Szakasits and Rákosi. Cultural cooperation between the U.S.S.R. and Hungary is equally emphasized by *Világosság*. During the winter of 1947 a great deal of space was given to reviews describing guest performances of the Russian Military Theater of Kiev, which spent several weeks in Budapest. Friendliness toward the military and occupation policies of the great Eastern neighbor logically follows the stress on cultural cooperation. Soviet personalities are frequently discussed, and party journalists do not fail to express their unbounded admiration. Marshal Voroshilov was recently hailed as "Hungary's most sincere friend who did everything in his power to insure the most lenient application of the armistice terms."

This orientation is supplemented by a determined anti-Western attitude in foreign political writings. While the Communist press is considerably more outspoken in this respect, Social Democratic publications do not lag far behind. Under the heading "Where are the workers' living conditions best?" *Világosság* carefully stated that according to the detailed surveys of American newspapers (?) the skilled industrial workers' living standards are better in the Soviet Union than in any

\* She was relieved of both public positions in March 1948, and officially expelled from the Social Democratic party, which she had served ably and loyally for several decades.

other part of the world. Sweden and the United States admittedly have very high living standards, but the economic performance of the U.S.S.R. and Sweden clearly illustrate what Communist and Social Democratic leadership can achieve in modern society. There is no discussion of Western democracies and their influence on the social structure of continental Europe.

The Communist newspapers<sup>12</sup> reflect similar thought patterns, more forcefully expressed and more generously documented. The single monthly periodical, *Társadalmi Szemle* (*Social Survey*), presents a violent version of party-line views and opinions under its banner head *The Scientific Periodical of the Hungarian Communist Party*. A recent article by its editor, Béla Fogarasi, serves as an appropriate illustration of the mentality of Hungary's Communists. Commenting on Winston Churchill's Fulton, Missouri, speech, the author says, "This speech served to poison the political relations of the Soviet Union with European countries. One of the objectives of the speech was to discredit the democratic order and government of Danubian and Southeastern Europe. . . . To prove that there is no democracy in this part of Europe, Churchill cites the inordinate growth of Communist parties. Danubian peoples, however, reason differently from Mr. Churchill. They are fully aware that *there can be no democracy without Communist parties*; . . . their self-confidence is also considerably increased by Marshal Stalin, who has frequently stated that they could freely rely on the sympathy and assistance of a real world power, the Soviet Union."<sup>13</sup>

In spite of recent revolutionary developments, a few politically moderate periodicals seem to have survived. As the leftist bloc gains in strength and cohesion, the number of these survivors will in all probability sharply decrease. Their present position is as precarious as the political destinies of the coalition government itself. Of these products of semiliberal journalism, *Magyar Nemzet* and *Haladás* are the most representative and reliable. *Magyar Nemzet* excels in its foreign news coverage and thus supplies valuable information concerning political developments in the rest of Danubian Europe. Its attitude toward the West is friendly, its opinions on international organization are constructive. In December 1946 *Magyar Nemzet* reported in detail on two important conferences. One of these was the meeting of the Social Democratic parties of Central Europe in Prague, with representatives of the socialist parties of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Poland, Bulgaria, and Rumania. The strong Hungarian delegation was led by Anna Kéthly. The other meeting of international significance was the All-Slav Con-

gress of Belgrade, held in order "to promote Slavic unity and brotherhood." According to this report, the Congress was primarily a meeting of the cultural representatives of the Slavic peoples and did not aim at the establishment of an all-Eastern European Slavic bloc, at least not when this preliminary conference convened (November—December 1946). *Haladás* (*Progress*) has one of the most distinguished of Hungary's journalists, Béla Zsolt, as its editor. It is the weekly paper of a political nonentity, the Hungarian Radical party, which nevertheless appears to camouflage a determined and intellectually effective group of professional people who have found a forceful and critical spokesman in the person of Zsolt. From all indications, his articles carry a great deal of weight in influencing the public opinion of Budapest. The National Peasant party and the Smallholders each publish objective and informative newspapers. Until recently, the Peasant party's organ, *Szabad Szó*, successfully lived up to the literal meaning of its name—*Free Voice*, but the steam-roller reaction to the conspiracies has considerably limited the freedom of this voice. Both its editorials and news reports are now Communist-inspired and increasingly follow the extreme leftist trend. The Smallholders' weekly publication, *Reggel*, manages to supply a detailed and interesting coverage of domestic developments, both economic and political. Such measures of internal reconstruction as the application of a nation-wide martial law and death penalties to black marketeers and smugglers are conscientiously discussed and appraised in *Reggel*.<sup>14</sup> Publications of a technical nature, which could be included on the list of liberal journalistic products, are few and mediocre. One noteworthy exception is the weekly paper of "an economic democracy," *Közgazdaság*, which regularly discusses such all-important issues as national planning and the three-year plan, budgetary or credit problems, and economic cooperation in the Danube Valley. Its editorials mirror the political views of the country's economic experts. Prior to the recent purges they displayed a spirit of restraint; now even this paper reflects the well-known ideological intolerance.

Few foreign-language publications have penetrated the intellectual "iron curtain" around Hungary, although, in the words of an official government publication, "the Budapest public is highly interested in British dailies and weeklies, and in Soviet papers." Apparently American political and literary materials cannot be widely disseminated in Hungary. Soviet authorities officially protested in the fall of 1946 against the publication and distribution of United States State Depart-

ment bulletins containing primarily official documents. The American Legation in Budapest, backed up by the State Department, has nevertheless continued to distribute the bulletins on a mailing-list basis. About 500 English-language and 500 Hungarian copies are regularly sent to newspapers and to a few carefully selected government officials.

Propaganda matters are handled by the Ministry of Public Information, whose official objectives involve the "information and *influencing* of Hungarian public opinion." Democracy has to be accepted, states an official bulletin of this department, even by those who were misled by the destructive propaganda of the past few years and have thus far proved incapable of adapting themselves to Hungary's present-day democracy. These broad and aggressive objectives were gradually implemented by such officials as the former minister of information, József Bognár, theoretically a Smallholder, in reality of the extreme Left. His ministry has organized hundreds of political and cultural indoctrination courses, given both in Budapest and in provincial communities under the personal supervision of Bognár. The courses deal with timely political and social questions, including such problems as "participation of the peasant class in a democracy, and the successful methods of national planning."<sup>15</sup> Propaganda and press are closely interwoven in present-day Hungary, exerting an ever-increasing political pressure on all phases of postwar reconstruction.

#### STATE VERSUS RELIGION

Until recently both Soviet occupation authorities and the Hungarian Communists avoided restricting by legislation the country's religious liberty. On the contrary, in order to disarm criticism by religious groups, the coalition government introduced legal measures to restore "the rights of individual communities belonging to accepted and recognized religions which were abolished by earlier Fascist regulations."<sup>16</sup> There has been a definite increase of popular attachment to the Roman Catholic Church, which retained its influence on public opinion. Although the land reform took a great deal of Church property, the cultural and spiritual aspects of the Church were not threatened until the nationalization of Church schools in 1948. The present Catholic leader of Hungary, Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty, is very outspoken on national matters and has taken a definite stand on contemporary issues. During the war he protested on several occasions against particular actions of the German and Hungarian Fascists. As Bishop of Veszprém he was repeatedly mistreated by gangs of the fascist Arrow Cross fol-

lowers. He severely criticized the land reform which deprived the Church of over half a million acres by limiting all ecclesiastical holdings to less than one hundred acres each. More recently in a letter addressed to the minister of justice he complained about the mistreatment of war criminals. As a Catholic leader he continually emphasized his anti-Communist sentiments and his disapproval of the methods and severity of Soviet occupation.

Some of Cardinal Mindszenty's close followers recently submitted a plan which would put Hungary's reconstruction on a broader and more democratic basis. This project entails a four-power supervision of the Hungarian army and police force after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary. The supervision outlined by the planners would be integrated and general rather than of a zonal character. It is aimed at the armed and police forces of Hungary, which are under strict Communist party control at present. Mindszenty's followers also contend that a majority of the people would oppose Communist control *with force* and that the recent ill-starred plots were a mere foretaste of what might come. These members of the small Liberty party and of the formerly dominant Smallholders appealed to London and Washington in the hope of getting "one last opportunity of preventing the establishment of a completely Communist dictatorship in Hungary." In the past two years relations between the Church and the state deteriorated rapidly until the Church now stands in open opposition to the government. Catholic youth organizations and many of the parochial schools were accused of "reactionary and fascist" activities and subsequently closed. In June 1948 the Hungarian Parliament adopted a bill nationalizing all Church-sponsored schools. Catholics have controlled about 5000 schools, constituting at least 60 per cent of all educational institutions. Cardinal Mindszenty vigorously opposed the measure and excommunicated all Catholic deputies who supported the nationalization measure. He also released a series of sharply worded pastoral letters which were read at Masses in the predominantly Catholic country. In reply the new Hungarian Workers' party, the merged Socialist and Communist parties, officially announced that the government would not tolerate any longer the education of youth in Church schools and that whatever action is taken by Cardinal Mindszenty and the bishops of the Church, Parliament's decision to nationalize Hungarian schools would not be affected. (A total of 230 deputies voted in favor of nationalization.)

Debate on the school issue was carried out against a background of



violence and strong mutual accusations. Several outstanding Catholic leaders were jailed along with recalcitrant members of the parliamentary minority. Even the relatively free intellectual atmosphere of Budapest suffered under the impact of these restrictive measures, which created a serious rift between the country's political rulers and its largely Catholic public opinion. Like other Danubian countries, Hungary definitely faces the task of bringing the urban intelligentsia into her national life. If the fundamental divergence of interests between Church and state persists, a discontented group of middle-class intellectuals may easily originate a Fascist, anti-Semitic, or extreme Clerical movement. Prophetic indeed are the words of a young Catholic writer, Jenő Katona: "Hungarian Catholicism is undergoing its most severe historical crisis, its most profound social and political transformation in many centuries. The Church had two fundamental problems, its feudal wealth based on land holdings and its dependence on the secular power of the State. . . . The entire social structure rooted in land-monopoly has now been blasted by outside forces. After the present conflict subsides the Hungarian Catholic Church will emerge as a new social-minded church, not the representative of a feudal agrarian-capitalism."<sup>17</sup> In the meantime the Church stands *for* connections with Rome and the Western world, *against* Communism and the spread of Soviet domination.

### THE ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION OF HUNGARY

A drastic land reform was undoubtedly the most significant step toward the economic reconstruction of Hungary. This reform was carried out during the period of political truce which characterized the first few months of coalition rule. An executive decree issued in March 1945 aimed at the confiscation of all lands owned by individuals of a pro-National Socialist record, and at the expropriation of all estates larger than 200 acres. Farm lands exceeding this size were seized in their entirety without official compensation. Former owners could keep their land only if they were farmers themselves, if they had fought against the Nazis, or in recognition of special service in the national resistance movement. Farm animals and all forms of agricultural equipment were taken with the estate; land obtained in this manner was divided among small landowners and landless peasants. It was also stated that newly created estates may not exceed one hundred acres.

The objective of this decree was a thoroughgoing redistribution of landed property, a governmental effort "to realize through the abolish-

ment of large estates the old dreams of the Hungarian Peasant, handing over to him his due share of the soil."<sup>18</sup> As the prewar social structure showed many signs of crumbling, this postwar reform was timely indeed. It compares in some respects favorably with the limited agrarian reform of 1920 which, forced through a reluctant Parliament by István Szabó's early Smallholders' Party, left untouched large and medium-sized estates amounting to well over 50 per cent of the land accorded to Hungary by the peace treaties of Trianon. There were close to three million landless peasants and "dwarf landholders" who depended for a livelihood mainly on casual labor and payments in kind. The large number of agricultural workers with no definite or fixed employment kept wages low and living conditions almost insufferable. The vast reserve of agricultural manpower contributed both to the unsteadiness of employment and to widespread social discontent; this agrarian problem led to political maladjustments, and eventually to the rise and success of extremist nationalist movements.

Set against this unhappy social background, the postwar land reform gains added significance. The redistribution of land involved about 7,000,000 acres and some 525,000 persons benefited from it. A few exceptional landowners were allowed to keep as much as 400 acres, but, on the whole, the large feudal estates so characteristic of the country disappeared in a few months. The land reform measure itself was hastily drawn up and carried out, yet it was the only way to induce peasants to undertake any cultivation in 1945. Consequently by 1946 over 90 per cent of the agricultural land was sown.

But there is also a negative aspect. Although the land reform succeeded in breaking the power of the feudal latifundia, it did not solve all of Hungary's agricultural problems. The new beneficiaries contributed little to the increase of national production, for many of them were—and still are—in desperate need of agricultural equipment and implements. The machine industry could not supply this equipment, as it had suffered more severely than any other major industry of the country. It will certainly be long before agriculture recovers; in the meantime, a full-fledged reconstruction of national industry is the principal postwar problem as well as the key to recovery.

The three-year plan officially announced in January 1947 is centered around the over-all objective of restoring industry to the 1938 level of production. This comprehensive plan was prepared by special experts of the Social Democratic and Communist parties with the cooperation of two ex-Hungarian professors of economics, the Communist expert

Jenő Varga of Moscow and Nicholas Káldor of London. Administrative details of this national plan closely parallel the Czech, Bulgarian, and Yugoslav projects, which propose to reach the economic levels of the last peacetime year by intensive national effort of two to five years of agricultural and industrial reconstruction. Two features are prominent in the Hungarian three-year plan: the forced nationalization of mines and industry, and the establishment of new labor unions as a means of broadening the workers' participation in the country's economic life. Coal mines were first on the list of the nationalization of resources. The economic argument was based on the fact that "the supply of energy is a monopoly and this monopoly cannot be left in private hands."<sup>19</sup> The nationalization of coal mines was followed by the nationalization of all other sources of energy including power plants, many of which were owned by foreign corporations. In this respect the same aggressively antforeign methods were used that proved so successful in Rumania and Czechoslovakia. Next step in this cycle was the *temporary* nationalization of heavy industries for a period of at least six years. According to the brief decree of then Minister of Industry Antal Bán, the state will assume direct control of all industries through a Council of Directors, which will replace the former system of capitalist owners and boards of directors managing individual corporations. The new council will serve as the employer of at least one hundred thousand industrial workers and will make all major executive decisions. The minister of industry will, in exceptional cases, serve as the final forum of appeal. Industrial profits will go to the state; if there are losses of operation, the state will bear them.

Similar decrees of nationalization have recently been drafted for banks, for all forms of mining, and for firms engaged in the distribution of agricultural products. Simultaneously the entire field of domestic and foreign trade was brought under the control and jurisdiction of a new Supreme Economic Council, headed by a leading member of the Communist party, Zoltán Vas. The council consisted of the members of a new political-managerial class replacing an earlier group of business leaders who became the victims of Fascist persecution. The three-year plan also provided for the creation of numerous labor unions. Since 1944 the railwaymen, post-office workers, heavy industrial workers, and even government employees formed unions, all of them in branches of industrial and public life, where they had been strictly forbidden under earlier regimes. Today the unions are Communist-controlled; as early as January 1946 their Communist members joined

forces with the left-wing Socialists, and as a majority acquired all the key posts. The Smallholders have only scant representation. The Trade Union Council, a group of leaders selected from all major labor unions, is headed by an ardent Communist, originally organizer of the Budapest streetcar workers' union. An essential institution in Hungarian industry is the factory committee, elected by the workers to represent their interests in dealing with the management, or composed of state officials now serving as replacements for an almost extinct managerial class. These small factory committees are particularly sensitive to party ideology and are permeated by Communist propaganda. Through them the workers are brought into constant contact with political authorities of the state, and their private life is closely watched. At trade union meetings they listen to lectures on foreign and domestic politics that are frequently little more than violent harangues against Britain and the United States. Trade unions and factory committees have thus become important tools in the hands of the country's dominant political-economic bloc.

The process of industrial recovery and the strengthening of a new laboring class have suffered considerably by the recent financial disaster which culminated in the inflation of 1946. The country's economic foundations were first weakened by the wave of German looting and seizures of valuable assets and capital goods. The economic deathblow was then delivered by the prompt acquisitiveness with which Soviet Russia reduced occupied Hungary to the role of an economic colony. The threatening upward spiral of prices and wages finally drove out the pengő, discredited by a long and unchecked period of inflation. The economic situation improved substantially after the stabilization of August 1946, when an old Austro-Hungarian monetary unit, the forint (florin), was established as the fixed national currency. By the end of 1946 industrial capacity had been gradually restored to about 60 per cent of the prewar potential, although Hungary continued to pay an exceedingly heavy reparations bill, both in industrial equipment and in current manufacturing production. Professor Káldor estimates that at least one fourth of the total current production goes to the U.S.S.R. The reparations burden is further enhanced by a strict interpretation of the Potsdam Agreement, according to which the Russians continue to compute the reparations bill in dollars of 1938 purchasing power. Nevertheless, Káldor reaches the strange conclusion that "the picture of Soviet Russia as the ruthless economic exploiter of

Hungary is far too one-sided.”<sup>20</sup> Reparations today include nearly all of the country’s capital goods production, and through the well-known device of “joint economic collaboration” agreements, Soviet control has penetrated all major phases of the economic structure. Particularly far-reaching are the agreements in oil and bauxite production, in Danube shipping, and in civil aviation. Capital and management in these fields are as tightly controlled as if their economic activities had been actually nationalized by the government. Soviet occupation authorities also acquired majority holdings in banks, insurance companies, mining corporations, and most of the remaining nonsocialized factories. Elaborate executive decrees were issued to give adequate legal basis to these joint agreements and to earmark the use of most industrial production for reparations. The first four decrees were issued in July 1946, and consist of the statutes of the Hungarian-Soviet Shipping Company, the Masovol Hungarian-Soviet Crude Oil Company, the Hungarian-Soviet Bauxite-Aluminum Company, and the Danubian Alumina Industry. Since then the Hungarian-Soviet Civil Aviation Company has been added to the list.

Hungary’s economic problem is closely related to developments in the Danube Valley, and to the prevailing political trends of the Continent. For several months after V-E day an improvement of trade relations within Europe helped to further economic reconstruction. In this period Hungary concluded valuable trade agreements with Yugoslavia, Italy, Austria, and Great Britain. The five-year Yugoslav-Hungarian trade treaty is perhaps the most significant, openly admitting the purpose of correlating Yugoslavia’s national five-year plan with the Hungarian three-year project. The British-Hungarian pact is less comprehensive. A Hungarian delegation reached this agreement with officials of the British ministry of food in November 1946; it provides for an exchange of foodstuffs for industrial raw materials to be supplied by various sterling bloc countries. Since 1947 this liberal trend of international trade relations has been gradually reversed in Hungary. The government rejected the Marshall Plan and discouraged further economic contacts with the West. As an important agricultural supplier, Hungary became an integral part of the Soviet-sponsored Danubian-Balkan network of economic alliances. Today her export-import relations center around such neighboring people’s republics as Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Rumania, to whom she is tied by an increasing number of comprehensive political and economic pacts.

## SUMMARY

Hungary today is in the twilight zone of liberated states; her domestic politics mirror the fundamental tensions among the Great Powers. The postwar era has undoubtedly seen a real moral and economic transformation of the country, spurred on by a series of significant, if temporary, liberal reform moves. Fair national elections resulting in Communist defeats and in an acceptable coalition government based on the Smallholders, a national party neither ultraconservative nor revolutionary, a thorough land reform, a reasonably free press, a stabilized currency, and a moderately successful process of industrial nationalization were promising landmarks at the beginning of the road toward reconstruction.

Yet the forces responsible for these significant achievements were gradually destroyed by the rising influence of the Communist party, which brought internal disruption and social crisis. The triumphs of liberation were obscured by an oppressive and prolonged military occupation, and the coalition government gave way to Communist domination, which reduced all other parties to silent and inactive partners. The land reform generated conflicts between Church and state, between the ex-gentry whose estates were expropriated and the new peasant landholders who now had property but no equipment. The newly won freedom of the press gradually disappeared as the political balance of power shifted and one party emerged as the final arbiter. The swift nationalization of major industries led to similar social conflicts, resulting in the elimination of a former managerial class and in a tight system of production discipline.

Soviet propaganda also contributed its share to the tenseness of the political atmosphere. The Russians effectively destroyed a great deal of the original good will which the workers, peasants, and intelligentsia felt for them after liberation. For a long time the Russians considered themselves the "generous liberators" and were unable to understand the Hungarian people's ingratitude. For this reason they treated the people more and more harshly as they encountered an increasing number of obstacles on the path leading to complete domination. After an initial period of incubation, these tensions suddenly exploded in dramatic *Putsch* incidents. The discovery of reactionary plots, the widespread arrests of prominent Smallholders, the final undermining of the coalition government's authority, and the call for new and unilaterally supervised national elections, all appear to be closely integrated,

successive stages in a drive toward the establishment of a one-party dictatorship. In the dogmatic phraseology of a Communist editor, "The Soviet Union supports and effectively aids Danubian peoples in *settling for them their disputed problems in a friendly spirit.*"<sup>21</sup>\* These settlements seem to be of a final and decisive nature; arithmetical illusions such as popular elections, normal partisan politics, and the coalition spirit do not play any role in this theory of government.

In foreign relations the purges of 1947 clarified the Hungarian picture to a certain extent. The country's foreign political position is determined by her peripheral location in Eastern-Central Europe. The United States and Great Britain are forced to admit that in this area the Soviet Union has certain minimal claims to *strategic security*. Following a broad interpretation of this concept of security, the Soviet Union has compelled neighboring countries to accept its choice of governmental personnel and methods of administration. National planning, industrial recovery, and financial stabilization are strongly encouraged in order to meet the enormous reparations and bolster up the impressive one-way movement of goods to the U.S.S.R. The entire field of domestic affairs is gradually subordinated to the dictates of foreign interests. Hungary has traveled a long and politically arduous road in the last two and a half years; past the brief illusions of a renascent post-war democracy, she is now headed toward the more permanent status of a political and economic satellite nation.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1. Oscar Jászi, "The Choices in Hungary," *Foreign Affairs*, April 1946, p. 456 *et seq.*
2. This provisional government represented all the parties which had taken part in the national resistance movement up to the time of the collapse of the country after a period of German occupation. A detailed party-breakdown of this provisional government, headed by General Béla Miklós of the Hungarian Army, shows the following picture among the members of the cabinet: 3 Social Democrats, 3 Communists, 2 of the Smallholders' party, 2 Conservatives, 2 Army Generals who were members of the first Armistice Commission to Moscow when the Horthy government, in its last desperation, was negotiating for peace with the Red Army. It is interesting to note that of the two portfolios given the Smallholders' party, one was the all-important ministry of foreign affairs while the portfolios of the

\* Italics mine.

Communists included the bases of economic reconstruction: trade, agriculture, and communications.

3. S. Szalai, Z. Horváth, *A Szociáldemokrata Párt Vádat Emel* (Budapest, 1946), p. 38.
4. Cf. István Száva, *New Hungarian Domestic Policy* (Budapest, 1946), pp. 34–35. (Published in English.) The author of this official account also gives a complete and significant summary of the principal objectives of Hungary's first "popularly elected" postwar government. These involved the following problems: to guarantee the food supplies, to break down the prices and inflation, to nationalize the mines and key industries, to guarantee order and public security, and *to overcome the reaction*. In the light of recent conspiracies and the seemingly wholesale liquidation of all "reaction," this early war objective of the government is certainly noteworthy.
5. O. Jászi, "The Choices in Hungary," *loc. cit.*, p. 462.
6. This significant address was given at a plenary session of the Social Democrats' National Party Congress in Budapest, and reported in detail in *Népszava*, Feb. 12, 1947, pp. 2–3.
7. Cf. *Világosság*, official daily of the Social Democratic party of Hungary, Jan. 23, 1947; the headline on this day read "Significant Arrests to Be Expected Following the Detailed Confession of Lajos Dálnoki Veress; Report on the Capture of Supreme Leader of the Conspiracy." *Világosság* also states that all conspirators will be "punished mercilessly," regardless of their military or political party affiliation. The latter remark is indicative of the disruptive purpose of these arrests and punishments, as no member of the extreme Left, of either the Social Democratic or Communist parties, was implicated in the conspiracy. General D. Veress, head of the Commission of Six, apparently set up an elaborate underground system in which he was known as "leader of the underground" (*földalatti fővezér*). The Commission of Six was composed of high-ranking staff officers in charge of such sections as information service, personnel section, matériel section, military operations, and strategic planning.
8. Another member of the Smallholders, President Tildy of the Hungarian Republic, set the tone of political appeasement when, a few days prior to Nagy's address, he declared: "The persons who have formerly hindered the progress, the political and economic development of the Hungarian nation, are now intent on the destruction of our democracy. . . . The enemies of our democracy cannot become our friends. The purposeful collaboration of Hungarians of all classes and all parties must be achieved, and must lead us toward a close cooperation with other free and democratic peoples. We have the strong determination to settle all outstanding




questions between Hungary and her neighbors and contribute to the development of all Danubian peoples." Cf. *Világosság*, Jan. 23, 1947, p. 1.

9. *Magyar Nemzet*, Jan. 19, 1947, p. 1.
10. Cf. John MacCormac, "Russia Rejects U. S. Hungary Note," *The New York Times*, March 9, 1947. Although officially suppressed, the American note of protest gained wide publicity and circulation in Budapest. The American government's information service distributed over 10,000 copies of the Hungarian translation of this note in an effort to influence future party strategies and to bolster up the morale of the Smallholders' party.
11. Cf. a full report on the party congress and fusion in *Kis Újság* (Budapest), March 10, 1948; also "Hungary's Socialists to Merge with Reds," *The New York Times*, March 9, 1948.
12. Best known among these are *Szabad Nép* (Free People) and *Szabadság* (Freedom), both of them daily papers, and *Szabad Föld* (Free Land), a weekly for "the agricultural class of Hungary."
13. Cf. Béla Fogarasi, "A dunai népek együttműködése" ("The Cooperation of Danubian Peoples"), *Társadalmi Szemle*, May 1946, pp. 354 *et seq.*
14. This drastic executive order was put into effect in December 1946. Judges are in permanent session to deal with such cases without delay. In addition to Budapest tribunals, twenty-two provincial courts are handling "crimes" connected with black-market operations. Penalties range from a minimum of ten years' imprisonment to death sentences. Cf. *Reggel*, Dec. 2, 1946, p. 5.
15. Cf. *Magyar Nemzet*, Nov. 22, 1946, p. 3. The report indicates that there are over one hundred students in each course, the period of instruction covering about two weeks.
16. Decree 6270/1946 M.E., published June 4, 1946, H.G. 125.
17. Jenő Katona, "Katolicizmus és politika," *Valóság*, March-May 1946, Vol. II, Nos. 3-5, pp. 42-46. (Translation mine.)
18. Cf. the Preamble of the decree, which states that "the system of latifundia will be destroyed in its foundations by the reform of landed property. Democratic influence of the new law upon the social and legal life of the country will be felt for years to come."
19. Cf. László Faragó, "Private Property and Nationalization," *New Hungary* (A Monthly Review of Southeastern Europe), Vol. I, No. 7, Dec. 20, 1946, p. 3. The first decree of nationalization was later implemented by an Act on the Nationalization of Coal Mining. All previous management is now superseded by a new National Council of Coal Mining Experts, responsible

for all mining activities of the state. There is a specific provision to the effect that "the Act does not apply to the coal-mining rights and interests of the U.S.S.R., the British Empire and the United States of America nor to any of their nationals."

20. N. Káldor, "The Danubian States," *The Times* (London), Nov. 19, 1946.
21. Cf. Béla Fogarasi, "A dunai népek együttműködése," *Társadalmi Szemle*, May 1946, p. 354.

## V • Rumania



Racially and geographically, Rumania is the most complex of the Danubian countries. Its unusual combination of ethnic strains assures it a significant place in European politics. From Transylvania came the powerful influence of the German colonists, concentrated there by the Hungarian rulers after 1100; Walachia received the heritage of the neighboring Slavic countries subdued by the Turks, while Moldavia accepted the culture of Russia and, through Poland, was brought into contact with the Renaissance. Of all forms of Western civilization, the Latin-French influence was the strongest and most pervading. In the statement of a Rumanian historian, "We are but a more or less truthful reproduction of French civilization."<sup>1</sup> Rumania owed her nineteenth-century independence to the support given by France in 1856 and 1878, and these events opened the way for close diplomatic and intellectual ties between the two countries. Seldom was a Southeastern European state in a position to blend so many different currents of culture and to create its own particular brand of civilization. Chronologically speaking, in recent centuries three layers of ethnic and cultural groups left their impact on Rumania. First came centuries of oppressive Turkish domination, relieved by the increasing Slavic influence of the new Eastern European countries, and finally the French orientation strongly asserting itself between the two world wars.

The geography of Rumania predestined the country for a strategic position on the European continent, and for an important historic function. The nation's lifeblood is sustained by four principal elements: the Danube, whose stream is the main artery of the country; the Carpathian Mountains and their rich mineral resources; the plains sweeping down from Hungary on the west toward the narrow thread of the Iron Gates, then expanding eastward into the steppes of the Ukraine; and lastly the Black Sea, Rumania's access to the Dardanelles and the Near East. These geographic factors clearly outlined Rumania's role both

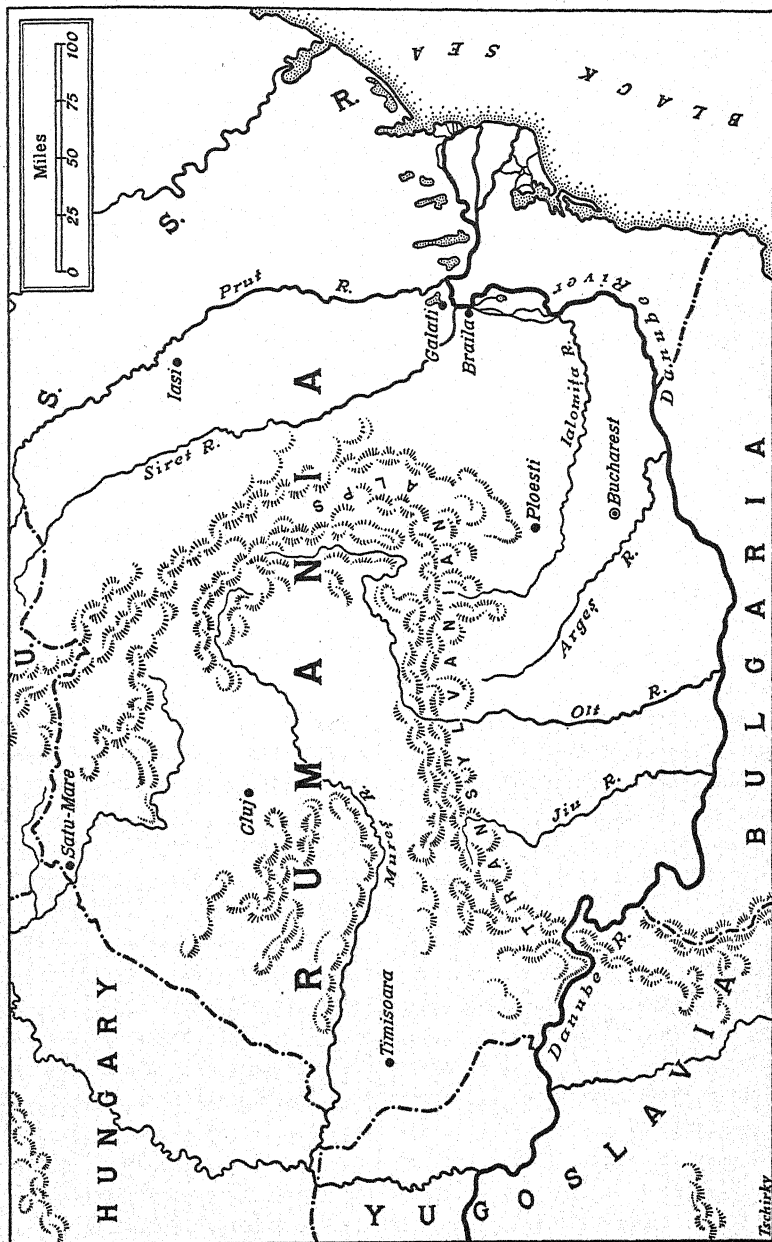
as a bar to German, Austrian, and Hungarian penetration eastward, and as a block in Russia's path toward the Black Sea and the Aegean. This double function, in turn, explains the strength and periodic weakness of a country exposed to the insatiable covetousness of its neighbors. The power nucleus lies in the combined provinces of Rumania proper, Walachia and Moldavia. There the Rumanian nation grew to full strength at a time when the entire Balkan Peninsula lay under Turkish conquest. There the Rumanians have always represented an overwhelming majority of the population, while the rest of the country is a series of outlying provinces, such as the plateau basin of Transylvania, Bucovina, Bessarabia, Dobruja, and the Bánát. In most of these the Rumanians form only a fair proportion, but not a majority of the population.

#### POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT (1938-1947)

First of the satellite countries to break with the Axis, Rumania was the last to hold national elections. When they were finally held in November 1946, the political succession was so heavily safeguarded that it was hardly necessary to publish election results. Under the Communist government of Petru Groza, Rumania combined for a period of over two and a half years the principal features of a constitutional monarchy and a Communist state. This anomaly can be best explained by a brief review of the recent political development of the country.

The prewar policy of several key governments definitely contributed to the undermining of public morality in today's Rumania. Democratic ideas clashed inevitably with traditional vested interests, elections were generally "managed," bribery and corruption were rampant. Unhappily for this wealthy and strategically placed country, the indifference of the large masses of people developed a strange monopoly of power. Government officials were the class chiefly interested in daily politics, and the only change likely to affect them at all was the passing from opposition to power, or vice versa—the dissolution of a regime and its retreat into opposition. The few crystallized political parties of prewar Rumania had only one constructive aspiration: to rule, and to rule alone.

The general trend toward government by and for the few was greatly strengthened by the constitution of 1938, which was planned and introduced by King Carol and was valid with interruptions until 1945. Absolutistic and one-sided, this document concentrated most of the



important powers in the person of the monarch, whose privileges were heavily guarded. The triple slogan of the constitution was authority, unity, justice, and these three principles pervaded every major provision. Superficially a perfect separation of powers was established: legislative power was given the king and representatives of the nation; executive power was also accorded the monarch, to be exercised through his cabinet; judicial power was to be asserted by a proper judiciary (Articles 31, 32, and 33). The constitution also made it clear that the executive had priority over other branches of the government and that the king, representing unity and continuity within the state, had all the major executive prerogatives.<sup>2</sup> In the legislative sphere a similar process of centralization was accomplished; the king had the authority to initiate all laws and to exercise a complete veto power. He could legislate by decree, subject to the subsequent approval by either the lower house of Parliament, the Chamber of Deputies, or the upper house, the Senate. In the conception of the constitution of 1938, the monarch's person thus emerges as the center of all political life. He is truly the "link that unites, the symbol which transforms the state into an organic unit."

In keeping with a strongly monarchical tradition, succession to the throne was carefully defined and legalized. If the direct line of legitimate royal descent had been broken, the two houses of Parliament were to convene as a single assembly and "within and not later than eight days, elect a King from a reigning House of Western Europe." Similar provisions decreed that the king could not at the same time be head of another state without the consent of the Assembly. He was head of the army, had the right to declare war, conclude peace, and enter into political and military treaties with foreign states (Articles 34, 35, and 36). As a logical counterpart to this stress of royal powers, the constitution also defined the manifold new duties of the people to the fatherland, the status and obligations of the individual citizens of Rumania. The introductory articles were significant in offering a full view of the authoritarian nature of the prewar state. "All Rumanians without distinction of ethnical origin and religious denomination *shall consider the Fatherland as the fundamental aim of their lives; they shall sacrifice themselves to defend its integrity, its independence and its dignity; they shall contribute by their work to its moral improvement and to its economic progress; they shall faithfully fulfil the civic obligations imposed on them by law, and they shall contribute willingly to the carrying out of public duties in-*

dispensable to the life of the State." \* A brief statement of citizenship was offered in such clauses as "All Rumanian citizens . . . are equal in the eyes of the law and owe respect and obedience to the law." Obedience to law and authority involved certain specific obligations, namely "civil or military duties, whether public or private." The constitution acknowledged no class distinctions, and no privileges in the imposition of taxes. Decreases and increases of taxes could only be general and fixed by law.

The constitution of 1938 obviously helped to pave the way toward the establishment of a personal dictatorship by Carol II. The king hastened to announce that parliamentary rule had been proven impossible and that he was compelled, in the best interest of the people, to declare his own rule by royal decree. Simultaneously a plebiscite was held on the new constitution, and the results, as generally expected, were close to an unanimous endorsement. Carol by now had almost achieved the aim of consolidating his regime and of breaking up the historically important political parties which kept opposing his arbitrary one-man rule. In December 1938 he decided to give his new "constitutional" government the final touch of dignity by conforming to the latest fascist models of Central and Eastern Europe. Overnight he created a monopoly party, the Front of National Rebirth, and eliminated all organized groups from the turbulent scene of domestic politics.

Until Carol's temporary ascendancy to power, prewar Rumania's development had been conditioned largely by two significant parties, the Liberal party and the National Peasants. The Liberals governed almost continuously from 1922 to 1928, and again from 1933 to 1937. They represented the conservative elements of the country, a commercial and financial oligarchy which consistently favored a policy of centralization, of self-sufficiency including the commercialization of state-owned enterprises, and the gradual elimination of foreign capital. Led successively by the three Bratianu brothers, who played an immensely significant role in the interwar period, the Liberal party retained a vigorous grip on the economic life of the country. Because of the absence of a rival, it became the supreme arbiter in most governmental matters. Although it was firmly established in the old provinces of Rumania proper, where it constituted the main avenue and access to political life, it was unable to extend its influence in the more recently

\* Italics mine.

incorporated provinces of the kingdom, where different political conceptions prevailed. Leaders of the Liberal party were unwilling at first to accept the restoration of Carol in 1930,\* but a basis of agreement was found later by one of their more subservient leaders, Titulescu. The latter secured certain important concessions from the king and, in exchange, accepted the position of foreign minister in Carol's new cabinet. Although Titulescu wielded real power in the foreign relations of the country, the Liberal party governments became to an increasing extent the mouthpiece of the king.

The National Peasant party fulfilled a different type of function in prewar Rumania. It held office for only two short periods, from 1929 until 1931, and from 1932 to 1933. It usually represented the forces of agrarian opposition, which asserted themselves strongly in a country where the farming peasant population constitutes about 80 per cent of the inhabitants. The land reform carried out after World War I led to the emergence of this party. For several years it formed an amorphous mass which required the demagogic activities of a strong leader to weld it together and impart to it the energy of a revolutionary party. This type of leadership was effectively performed by Iuliu Maniu, who has frequently been described as Rumania's only disinterested statesman. While never a sparkling or constructive politician on the government's side, he managed to oppose successfully both the dictatorship of Carol and the ever-tightening rule of the Communists. He was always anxious to lead a peasant party on a national scale. In the Greater Rumania after 1918 Maniu brought together the old Peasant party of Rumania proper and the new and more progressive elements of Transylvania, Bessarabia, and Bucovina. This geographic and political alliance was slowly forged in the nineteen twenties and was first called upon to form a national government in 1929. Maniu's party program was radical and distinguished by its liberality toward the ethnic minorities to which it promised cultural equality. In general, it aimed at the adoption of a system of regional autonomy, a satisfactory measure in Rumania, where discontent was caused by the excessive centralization exerted from Bucharest. In the economic domain the National Peasants opposed the liberals' slogan of self-sufficiency and advocated the subordination of industrial interests to agriculture, which they considered as the country's mainstay. Significantly, Maniu's followers

\* Carol, as crown prince, renounced his right to the throne in 1926 and went abroad. He suddenly returned four years later and was subsequently restored to the monarchy.



looked upon foreign capital as an invaluable aid and indispensable condition for the country's further development; they demanded a regime of legality in which foreign and local capital were to be treated on an equal footing. Maniu's attitude usually implied an emphasis on constitutional methods; in periods of extraconstitutional stresses he simply assumed a passive policy of abstention. For fifteen years he unwaveringly followed the tactics laid down in a speech delivered to a delegation of his party members in February 1932. "Today the nation is deprived of its constitutional rights; *we are on the threshold of bankruptcy, both economic and moral*. . . . The nation is in the midst of disquieting social and economic troubles, and is being conducted by inexperienced and unprepared men, deprived of intuition and without inspiration. In such solemn moments you ask for my guidance. I shall offer you none. . . . Uphold the unity of the National Peasant Party because it is by its aid that we shall revert to a democratic life and extricate the peasantry from its present wretchedness."<sup>3</sup>

King Carol and his fascist advisers succeeded in playing off the Peasant party against the government-forming Liberals, in encouraging the secession of dissident parties, and in weakening the allegiance of the two major groups toward their real leaders by persuading mediocre personalities to accept high office. National discontent, in turn, increased the government's intolerance, and by the late nineteen thirties anti-Semitic, antim minority, and antilabor measures were practically the "order of the day." Such drastic deprivations of basic civil liberties infuriated the more progressive urban middle classes. One Bucharest newspaper expressed popular feelings quite adequately when it stated: "The Government, which since its assumption of the reins of power has not even once had the moral courage to verify whether it enjoys the confidence of the nation or not, should comprehend from these manifestations that it has lost even the ultimate justification for continuing its activities, namely the hope of obtaining an amelioration of the present situation."<sup>4</sup>

The weakening of the government's moral position and the destruction of all organized opposition led to the appearance of such extremist fanatic groups as the Iron Guard. Originally a localized student agitation, it quickly developed into a revolutionary movement and then became the foundation for several fascist regimes. Encouraged by Hitler, its leaders finally forced out King Carol, who was officially succeeded by his son Michael, but in reality all power was entrusted to Nazi-minded generals of the army. Under the "inspired guidance" of Ion

Antonescu, Rumania's history reached a dramatic turning point in June 1941, when the government enthusiastically joined Germany's war against the Soviet Union. The National Peasant party played an unsavory role in this disastrous period of the country's history. Maniu's stubbornness and dislike of compromise made him commit serious tactical errors involving close collaboration with fascist forces. For several months his party allied itself with the Iron Guard so as to engage in a more effective and bitter fight against the monarchy. Maniu also tolerated Antonescu's treacherous political start in order to get rid of the king; in November 1941 he even approved of the large-scale military action taken and on behalf of his Peasant party welcomed its initial results with enthusiasm. What really united this strange assortment of political forces was the pleasing prospect that the Germans would destroy an uncomfortably powerful neighbor. The ruling classes also hoped that Hitler's conquest of Moscow would completely remove the threat to their social and economic privileges.

Rumania's wartime experiences form a period of long and bloody transition from a fascist, Nazi-dominated state into a monarchy ruled by a Communist coalition government. During Germany's penetration into the Soviet Union, Rumania served as a military base from which renewed campaigns of conquest could be launched and which, eventually, was transformed into a full-fledged battleground. The most momentous change occurred in August 1944 when in a historic *coup d'état* young King Michael suddenly "liberated" himself from the disastrous influence of Antonescu, reasserted the imperiled powers of the throne, jailed the leading Nazi-collaborators, and formed a nonparty cabinet. Members of the new Government of National Unity included leaders of the historic National Peasant and Liberal parties and, for the first time in Rumanian history, representatives of the newly fledged Communist and Socialist parties. This first and probably most vigorous national coalition was soon forced out of office. Under steadily increasing pressure from the extreme Left, several compromise cabinets attempted to bridge an ever-widening ideological gap between the opposing forces. By early 1945 a thoroughly reorganized and reoriented postwar regime had crystallized, including remnants of the two historic parties conveniently deflated by the presence of a Communist vice premier and ministers of justice, labor, and communications. For vice prime minister the Communists picked the independently wealthy former capitalist Petru Groza, who has since emerged as one of the top-level leaders of the party.

Although the Rumanian Left had always suffered from the absence of an organized wartime resistance movement and was handicapped by the Rumanians' pride in being an outpost of Latin, rather than Slavic, civilization, the Communists had no particular trouble in gaining key positions and over-all control of national administration. In this process they were aided by several favorable developments. Russian annexation of Bessarabia and northern Bucovina, combined with the settlement of substantial numbers of Russians in strategic Rumanian towns near the mouths of the Danube, helped to intimidate Rumanians and undermined their hopes of resisting Soviet pressure. Anti-Communist minorities were quickly silenced. Russian occupation officials ordered the deportation of large groups of Germans settled in Transylvania, and carefully supervised the repatriation of this important and potentially dangerous minority. A factor of immediate significance was that throughout 1944 and early 1945 the Rumanian army was out of the country, with some fourteen divisions marching on the road to Budapest, still Nazi-held at the time, or campaigning in the snows of the Tatra Mountains. Politically the army has always represented a conservative force and presumably would have turned against the more militant members of the Left, temporarily united under the banner of a National Democratic Front.

The Russians kept as prisoners of war the great bulk of the Rumanian army which they had captured. From its ranks they selected and trained two divisions as a Communist militia; these were sent back to Rumania in 1945 to serve as the armed force of the government. With the army thus neutralized and partially mobilized for their purposes, the Communists had no difficulty in taking over and reorganizing the entire police system. Another helpful factor was the sudden appearance of Vyshinski, who came with elaborate instructions from Moscow, forced the resignation of the temporary coalition government, and insisted that Groza form a new cabinet restricted to Communist and Socialist representatives with a mere sprinkling of opposition elements. The latter were included only under strong Anglo-American pressure exerting itself through the medium of several official notes drawing attention to the one-sided character of the regime. The British and Americans insisted on the formation of a more representative, popular, and democratic cabinet, and finally Groza yielded to the extent of asking two members of the opposition to join the government. Thus 1946 opened with the recognition of the new government by Great Britain and the United States, as well as by the Soviet Union. Groza also com-

mitted himself to the holding of national elections at the earliest possible date. Anglo-American pressure and King Michael's repeated demands accounted for the inclusion in the government of such men as Tatarescu, head of the small group of Liberal party dissenters. For a period of about a year and a half Tatarescu held on to the vital portfolio of Foreign Affairs.<sup>5</sup> Having been closely associated with Carol's prewar dictatorship in the capacity of premier and foreign minister, he could hardly be labeled as a liberal statesman; dressed as a progressive version of the old Liberal party, his group seems to have suited the purposes of the newly emerging Communist-dominated government.

Apart from such minor parties of the pseudo-opposition, the balance of political power was wielded by Premier Groza's own Plowmen's Front, which had had a brief prewar history as a small group of peasants and farm laborers in southern Transylvania. By the late spring of 1945 the Front laid claim to a following of a million peasant "plowmen," various progressive professional and women's organizations, over a million well-controlled and disciplined trade unionists, and about three hundred thousand members of a typically postwar "Progressive Youth" movement. Although a formal commitment to the Western Powers raised the necessity of a national election right from the inception of Groza's government, it was postponed several times in favor of certain definite short-term objectives. A significant task was performed by the introduction of a War Criminals Bill, which provided for the thorough purging of fascist elements in the army and civil service. The new Communist minister of justice, Lucretiu Patrascanu, immediately set the people's courts in motion, and with a reorganized political police operating throughout the country, thousands of people in every walk of life were brought before the courts. Another short-term problem centered around the issue of Rumanian reparations to Russia. The initial estimate involved \$300,000,000 worth of raw materials and commodities, particularly oil and grain. Insistent Soviet demands for immediate delivery proved to be the biggest impediment to Groza's government in formulating its new economic and political program. Soviet-Rumanian collaboration obviously involved a one-way traffic in the country's most valuable stock of materials, goods, and services.

#### THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS OF 1946

As the months went by, the delaying tactics of the Groza government became increasingly obvious. Even when the new electoral laws were published in July, no definite date was set for the elections. The Amer-

ican and British governments expressed their sincere dissatisfaction concerning the delay in holding the country's first postliberation elections. It is also important to note that about three weeks prior to the final date, set for the latter part of November, both the United States and Great Britain officially charged that "Rumanian authorities are attempting to win the elections by various methods of falsification *now—even before the elections take place.*"\* By that time both governments had received documentary evidence of acts of violence, as well as nonregistration of voters and arrest and disfranchisement of opposition voters on a large scale. Three days before the elections the two countries again combined forces in sending a direct note to Premier Groza. The strongly worded protest stated that "the elections must freely express the will and aspirations of the Rumanian people." Groza's personal reply made it clear that the elections were an internal affair of his country and did not warrant any outside interference.

The elections themselves, in which more than 6,500,000 Rumanians went to the polls, including women for the first time, focused considerable attention on the domestic politics of Rumania. The results showed an overwhelming victory for Groza's National Democratic Front. The six parties comprising this government bloc received about 4,800,000 votes of the total, while the three opposition parties—the National Liberals, National Peasants, and the Independent Socialists—polled about 1,200,000 votes. This outcome of the polling assured over 80 per cent of the seats in the new Parliament to the government bloc. The process of reducing the opposition was directed particularly against Maniu's National Peasant party, which was now deflated to a handful of representatives. Of the sixty-six nongovernment seats in Parliament, twenty-nine went to the so-called Hungarian People's Union which, as a typically Communist-led party, had a monopoly of political activity among the Hungarians of Transylvania and soon declared itself in support of the ever-increasing government bloc. The new structure of the legislative branch prompted Premier Groza to remark proudly, "The first freely elected Parliament represents a big step toward the consolidation of the strongholds of democracy in Rumania." A new cabinet was formed around representatives of the six government parties. The Communists immediately filled the four key portfolios of domestic politics, namely Interior, Justice, Communications, and Economic Reconstruction. The Communist party had long wanted to take over the positions connected with finance and economics. One of the

\* Italics mine.

top three leaders of the party, George Gheorghiu-Dej, now moved into the newly established Ministry of Economic Reconstruction. He was also given control and jurisdiction over the Ministry of Finance, which was temporarily held by one of George Tatarescu's followers of the dissident National Liberals. Another prominent Communist who moved into the national limelight after the elections was Emil Bodnaras, who now became secretary of state in the prime minister's office. An aggressive adherent of the Communist party, Bodnaras was specifically charged with securing the closest possible cooperation between the major parties of the government bloc and the recipients of various portfolios in the cabinet. It is important to note that both Gheorghiu-Dej and Bodnaras are representatives of a newly emerging faction within the Communist party, the group of *internationalists* favoring Rumania's speedy and complete integration with a Soviet-dominated Danubian-Balkan federation. Against them are the party's extreme *nationalists*, who have been relegated into the background after the recent general elections but were represented temporarily in the cabinet by Minister of Justice Patrascanu.<sup>6</sup> Groza, who continued to serve as prime minister and president of the cabinet council, announced that the elections had ended the necessity for including representatives of the opposition in the cabinet, as originally decreed by the Big Three at the Moscow Conference. At this point the first stage in the story of Rumania's political reconversion, starting in March 1945 with the formation of the earliest Groza cabinet, seems to have drawn to its end. The increasing influence of the Soviet Union had by then pervaded almost every aspect of domestic and foreign affairs. King Michael's formal opening address in the newly elected and reorganized Parliament gave a lucid expression of the country's political program and ideological orientation when it stated: "Our most important task is to continue to develop relations of full friendship and close cooperation with the Soviet Union. . . . Special attention will be given to friendly relations with all neighboring countries—Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary." The king also announced that the Rumanian National Bank would soon be taken over by the state. The speech was keynoted by the general remark: "The new Parliament has the heavy responsibility of liquidating the sad consequences of war." Within this general frame of reference the Plowmen's Front, once a small, independent, and radical peasant movement, now the dominant party in the government bloc, reaffirmed its political principles, which centered around three major objectives:

- 1) To increase the membership of leftist parties;
- 2) To drive the "historic parties" into opposition, render them gradually less and less effective, and split their ranks as a preliminary step to complete liquidation; finally
- 3) To create a new united party of workers, peasants, and intellectuals.

The elections themselves contributed a great deal toward the accomplishment of the first two objectives. The chief opposition groups, Maniu's party and Bratianu's Liberals, were incredibly reduced in national importance, winning only 35 seats of a total of 414. The opposition parties issued a communiqué declaring that they considered the parliamentary elections void and warning that they would fight for a new nation-wide vote. Swamped under the overwhelming majority acquired by the government bloc, the opposition accused it of holding up final figures and of exerting violence in several key districts. Although this important communiqué was circulated among all major newspapers, government censorship prevented its publication. *Dreptatea*, the newspaper of Maniu's Peasant party, failed to appear for several days because most of its contents were censored. Communist publications, on the other hand, forcefully stated that the electoral triumph was essentially a mandate to the party to assume a larger share of the responsibilities of government than it had carried in the recent past.

#### LIQUIDATION OF THE OPPOSITION

The second stage in recent political developments centered around a concerted and systematic drive to eliminate all political opposition, and culminated in the arrest and imprisonment of certain key leaders. Soon after the elections of 1946, parties of the opposition found it impossible to cooperate with a national front dominated by the Communist party and its ideological kin, the Plowmen's Front. As early as March 1947, leaders of the three remaining opposition parties sent a joint message to the four foreign ministers of the major powers, then meeting in Moscow, and protested the widespread arrests of their party members. The appeal was submitted by Juliu Maniu as head of the National Peasant party, by C. Titel Petrescu, head of the Independent Social Democratic party, and by Constantin Bratianu, leader of the Liberals. The opposition's appeal was urgent and insistent and disregarded the habitually tempered phrases of diplomacy when stating that "the nonrepresentative and abusive government not only aims to

maintain in power the present regime but has other aims that at present cannot be foreseen." Significantly, on the date that this message was submitted to the Moscow Conference Rumania's press quoted Prime Minister Groza as having reached the conclusion that there could be no understanding between government and opposition within the same country.

This statement is typical of the well-known *Gleichschaltung* process in its full vigor. After a series of special meetings, Groza's Plowmen's Front embarked on a nation-wide political purge beginning with the ranks of its own membership. It issued the following interesting denunciation combined with a new set of specific war objectives: "The Plowmen's Front differs from Maniu's National Peasant party in that the latter serves the interests of the big landowners. *Maniu's party is the worst enemy of the working men of town and country . . .* The executive committee has decided to take the following measures immediately—reorganization of its cadres, so that all party officials, from the highest to the lowest, *should be selected from honest men of modest means*, devoted to the cause of the working peasantry . . . The Plowmen's Front will fight reaction in both towns and villages, and will collaborate with the working class to defend the democratic rights of the peasants."<sup>7\*</sup>

Shortly thereafter the National Peasant party was dissolved, and Maniu was arrested with several of his followers for "organizing agitation which would have led to civil war," and for plotting against the government. Undoubtedly this party consisted of a strangely mixed group of peasants and urban middle class, and probably it was farthest to the right of any party allowed to exist since 1944. Moreover, members of the former Iron Guard had infiltrated its ranks, and outdated reactionaries of early prewar regimes had selected it as a group with a generally respectable reputation. In spite of such shady elements in his following, Maniu was realistic in his struggle for political power and served effectively as the leader of an important, if not dominant, party. It was the only one capable of offering serious resistance to further Soviet encroachments, a circumstance which contributed decisively to its ruthless liquidation. Although the government staged a lengthy trial to prove Maniu's guilt and the subversive activities of his followers, there was no evidence that the National Peasant party was dominated by "Fascist elements" or that its leaders engaged in secret conspiracies against the Groza regime. On the whole, charges against Maniu were startlingly similar to those against Kovács and Nagy of

\* Italics mine.



Hungary, against Petkov of Bulgaria, and against most other opposition leaders of Danubian Europe. The charges involved a secret plan for reorganization of the Rumanian army to be used for eventual resistance against the Russians, as well as conspiracy with British and American representatives to overthrow the government by violent means. These official complaints made it clear that Maniu's widely publicized trial was aimed not only at silencing the last critical voice, but also at keeping Rumanian subjects from any further social contact with Westerners.<sup>8</sup> Although the peasant leader denied every charge, his sentence, officially pronounced on November 11, 1947, was a foregone conclusion and surprised only by its extreme severity. At seventy-five Maniu was found guilty of high treason by a military court and sentenced to solitary confinement for life. Simultaneously all of his associates were convicted of the charges against them and given long-term prison sentences. Their principal crime seems to have been communicating with British and American political representatives to ask them to apply pressure that would oust the Communist-dominated government.

Maniu's effective silencing was not an isolated incident in the recent development of Rumania's domestic politics. It evoked both a reaction from abroad, in the form of a stern protest by the United States State Department, and immediate further steps of drastic restriction by governmental officials. The American note unequivocally stated that while the government of the United States was allegedly implicated in a "conspiracy to overthrow the Rumanian government by force and violence," it deemed it unnecessary and inappropriate to dignify charges presented in this fashion. These charges "falsely insinuate that the Government of the United States, through its representatives, has advocated or lent support to a contemplated attempt at overturning the Rumanian Government by force."<sup>9</sup>

Liquidation of the remaining opposition parties was fairly easy; it was actually sealed by the arrest of Maniu. Although with the Maniu followers in jail the peasant groups lacked both leadership and courage, there was yet another group of potential opposition earmarked for dissolution. This was the Liberal party under the leadership of Tatarescu,\* who had been entrenched for several years in both the ministries of

\* The term "Liberal party" is misleading in recent Rumanian politics. For a period of about three years there were actually two Liberal parties, distinguished only by the name of their leaders and known respectively as the Bratianu Liberals and Tatarescu Liberals. By November 1947 the one-party State swallowed both shades of so-called liberals by dissolving their party organizations.

Foreign Affairs and of Finance. His survival was a miracle in many ways, as his checkered past included high political positions in the service of King Carol and even in the disastrous Antonescu regime. Since March 1945 he had readily assumed the role of a liberal statesman and guardian of small bourgeois interests and had enthusiastically joined the new Groza government in the dual capacity of vice premier and foreign minister. As an ambitious and flexible diplomat, he successfully presented Rumania's case at the Paris Peace Conference of 1946. In the elections of November 1946 Tatarescu's Liberals won seventy-five seats in Parliament, an impressive result when compared to the seventy seats gained by Groza's Plowmen's Front, or to the sixty-eight of the Communists. By the latter part of 1947 his party was slowly eliminated from the control of the national economy and Tatarescu's voice as a foreign minister was gradually silenced in favor of a few aggressive champions of the Communist party. When he began openly to criticize the police terror of the government and the general inefficiency of its economic policies, he was quickly implicated in the treason trial of Maniu's followers, given a resounding vote of no confidence in Parliament (a ratio of 187 to 5 votes), and forced to resign as deputy premier and foreign minister. His removal opened a suitable way for the liquidation of his party, which was officially dissolved in order "to safeguard the unity of political life." One strategic move then logically led to another—and in a thorough reorganization of the cabinet by Premier Groza, the remaining Liberal members of the government were forced to resign and join a dwindling, practically illegal parliamentary opposition. These resignations, in turn, vacated the key ministerial positions of Foreign Affairs, Finance, Public Works, and Culture. While government members celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, these portfolios were summarily handed to leaders of the Communist party, the progovernment Socialist party, and the Plowmen's Front.

November 1947 thus looms as the critical period of full conversion to the monolithic, one-party state pattern. Once this pattern was fully established, Rumania's final transition from monarchy to people's republic was also assured. But the careful architects of this fundamental transition first had to be convinced, in the words of a Hungarian writer, that "the last of the Mohicans were now irretrievably disappearing from the political jungle reminiscent of prewar Rumania."<sup>10</sup> Three new cabinet ministers were called upon to perform these complex operations; members of this trio actually represent the climax of Com-

munist power and domination in present-day Rumania. They are the new foreign minister, Mrs. Ana Pauker; the new minister of finance, Vasile Luca; and the new minister of war, Emil Bodnaras. Of the three, Mrs. Pauker has been best known to the outside world as one of the Eastern European political leaders who helped to set up the nine-nation Communist Information Bureau. She was one of Rumania's representatives at the conference in Poland where the framework of the Cominform was originally established. Her signature appears not only on this significant recent document but also on the 1943 statement dissolving the Communist International. She has served as secretary general of the Communist party and has frequently been described as the driving force of Rumanian communism. Prior to World War II she spent several years in jail, left for the Soviet Union and returned to Rumania with the advancing Red Army in 1944, along with several leading members of the party. Replacing Tatarescu, she is thus far the only woman to hold the post of foreign minister in a modern government.

Under Mrs. Pauker's jurisdiction the Foreign Ministry was considerably reoriented to suit the political inclinations of the new incumbent. In an initial communiqué she clearly voiced the leitmotiv in the conduct of foreign affairs: "Rumania will be an active factor in the anti-imperialist struggle under the leadership of the Soviet Union." More specifically she outlined the following objectives as guiding points of her administration:

- 1) Further consolidation of friendship with the U.S.S.R.;
- 2) Treaties of alliance and mutual assistance with such neighboring countries as Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Albania;
- 3) Application for membership in the United Nations; and
- 4) Continued interest in the democratization and demilitarization of Germany.

Beyond these theoretical objectives certain practical moves reflected the iron determination of the new foreign minister. Within a week of assuming office, Mrs. Pauker ordered 165 diplomats and senior foreign service officials removed from positions where, as the ministry's bulletin stated, "they traded the country's independence."<sup>11</sup> The government press reacted favorably to the drastic purges accompanying the application of a modified line in foreign policy. One of the Communist dailies of Bucharest, *Romania Libera*, expressed its satisfaction by stating: "Our

foreign policy used to be framed without the knowledge, control, or approval of the people—this situation is now definitely altered.”

Although Luca is a more obscure protagonist of the party, Bodnaras has recently emerged as the full-fledged political technician of Groza's government. In December 1947 he was named minister of war, thus establishing complete control over the Rumanian army, and elevated to formal cabinet status from the post of undersecretary of state in the office of the premier. Bodnaras is a Moscow-trained Communist who deserted as a regular army officer from the Rumanian army when his work as a Communist agent was discovered. In the early twenties he joined Russia's revolutionary forces, came back to Rumania a few years later, and was imprisoned as a deserter. He again made his way to Russia, and after years of training finally returned to Rumania shortly before King Michael's momentous *coup d'état* of August 1944. Since Rumania's surrender to the Allies he has been one of the most colorful figures in the government. For the past two years he has directed the Special Security Service, Rumania's second and most secret political police. He has also succeeded in purging and reorganizing the army until he now ranks with Interior Minister Teohari Georgescu in police power and in effective control of the domestic situation.<sup>12</sup>

After the preliminaries of dissolving the historic opposition parties and reorganizing the entire cabinet, only two major steps remained. The first of these was the consolidation of the remaining political parties into one massive fighting organization. The fusion itself was precipitated by Premier Groza's appeal for a badly needed “workers' unity.” The appeal was followed by a joint congress of the parties concerned, primarily the Communists, the Plowmen's Front, and a rump Social Democratic party which promptly voted in favor of fusion. The national administration of Rumania was thus transformed into a one-party government based on a newly welded United Workers' party and trenchantly characterized by the *Economist* as a “bogus mass organization run by the Communists.” Leaders of the government described the new workers' party not as an automatic process of merging, but as a deliberate political union based on common ideological principles and on a unity of action. The party itself soon published a program which proudly established it as “the vanguard and the leader of the working class, and of all who can work in Rumania. To be able to accomplish this role successfully, the party must be based on democratic centralism. . . . *The minority must obey unconditionally. All members of the*

*party must submit to party discipline. There can be no factions in the party.*"\* The United Workers' party "will make no concessions regarding its principles to other classes and parties, but will fight with revolutionary intransigence all enemies of the working class. . . . The party will be guided in its whole policy by the ideology of proletarian internationalism."<sup>13</sup> Specific governmental reforms were also proposed involving the development of heavy industries, the introduction of new fiscal and educational measures, and in foreign affairs the maintenance of "sacred friendship and collaboration in all domains with Soviet Russia." The one-party regime thus staked out a broad field of political activity ranging from the daily conduct of administrative matters to a long-term *rapprochement* toward the Soviet Union. In the thorough overhauling of domestic politics only one institution of the past was allowed to survive, the monarchy. The second major step of Communist-dictated national consolidation centered around the elimination of the monarchy through a forced resignation of King Michael.

#### FROM MONARCHY TO PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

For over three years the kingdom of Rumania was an island between Soviet Russia and the new republics of Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Hungary. During this period the young king was genuinely popular, and even the most extremist Communists needed him as an element of stabilization, at least until the completion of the country's "reconstruction." Under his official leadership they were able to introduce revolutionary changes without running the risk of open revolt. A characteristic statement was made by Vice Premier Tatarescu in November 1946: "From Gheorghiu-Dej† to myself we shall all fight together for the consolidation of the Monarchy, because we are convinced that the King is the strongest factor which rallies all Rumanians." Even while the government was going ahead with a concerted drive to power, its members continuously denied antimonarchist rumors and did not engage in any propaganda campaign against Michael. Premier Groza repeatedly emphasized that his government was not hostile to the monarchy and that, on the contrary, "the King, the Church, the Army, the people and the government are one."

This short-lived unity was not just a political miracle. Rumania's

\* Italics mine. Cf. Appendix, pages 308-310.

†The aggressive Communist who later became minister of national reconstruction and finally succeeded Tatarescu as vice prime minister.

ability to retain a constitutional monarchy was to a large extent the result of historic tradition.<sup>14</sup> It was also a reflection of King Michael's skillful opportunism in a country in which opportunism has always been more dominant than ideology. Although opposed by mighty and well-directed forces, the young king played his cards carefully and shrewdly for several years. He had little real power, although theoretically he had the authority to oust the Groza government, call new elections, pardon political prisoners, and block Communist lawmaking. His most spectacular move was the well-known coup of 1944, which swung the country from the Nazi camp to the Allied side. It also opened the German southeastern front to the Russians and shortened the war by many months. By his brave coup Michael also insured that the whole of Central Europe would be liberated by Soviet and not by Anglo-American troops. Paradoxically, his blow at the Germans set in motion the Sovietization of Eastern Europe, the very same forces which have since driven him from the throne.<sup>15</sup> For the last two years of his reign the king was faced with an almost insoluble dilemma. On the one hand he had to endorse the major policies of his administration, however obnoxious they might be; on the other, he was called upon to safeguard the form of government best suited to the traditions of the Rumanian people. Caught by the difficulty of reconciling these two extremes, he was in a position equally embarrassing to himself and to the Communists. His abdication on December 30, 1947, although greatly depressing to the average Rumanian, who saw in the king the symbol of national independence, came as no distinct surprise.

On the whole, the monarchy presented an anomaly in Rumania's contemporary history: a king with a Communist government in a country dominated by an outside power, and the only ruler behind the so-called "Iron Curtain" who managed to retain the throne. When Maniu and other opposition leaders were purged on charges of treason, when the major political parties were dissolved, and aggressive Communist leaders moved into the key ministerial positions, there remained no tangible opposition to the Russians except the king. The end of the monarchy came when King Michael returned from London and asked his government for permission to marry. The marriage issue apparently provided a convenient medium to accomplish what the Communist hierarchy had long desired and what the king's advisers recognized as inevitable. Within a few days after his return Premier Groza summoned Michael and told him he must abdicate, whereupon the king signed the document which had been prepared for him. The abdication de-

cree briefly states that because of the great political, economic, and social changes effected in Rumania since the war, the institution of the monarchy no longer corresponded to the present conditions of state. It thus "represents a serious impediment to Rumania's development," and leads to the abdication of the king, who renounces all the prerogatives of the throne for himself and his successors.\* Parliament met the same day, approved the resignation, and created a new people's republic headed by the same type of Presidium as provided for in the recent Yugoslav and Bulgarian constitutions. Next day Parliament met again and unanimously approved the government's choice as provisional president of the republic. Groza's government followed immediately with the proclamation of a people's republic, declaring that the removal of the monarchy opened great opportunities for the advancement of popular democracy and for increasing the welfare of workers, peasants, and intellectuals. The official communiqué was keynoted by the statement: "Thus, the Rumanian people have conquered the liberty to build a new form of state—a people's republic." As documented by the hasty statements of the new policy makers, the king's decision to abdicate came with great speed. Nevertheless, it is a significant development in completing the ideological sweep of Eastern Europe and the *Gleichschaltung* of Danubian states into "people's republics." The latter, now entirely under the influence of Communist governments, have been stripped of the institution of monarchy which, occasionally, was able to offer an element of passive resistance.

The transformation process was marked by such familiar legal and political formalities as an election for members of a National Assembly, the drafting of a new constitution, and the appointment of a purely Communist cabinet. In Rumania these moves were accomplished in a few days, without provoking any unexpected resistance. The parliamentary elections of March 1948 gave 93 per cent of the total vote to the Communist-led bloc, whose victory was virtually assured by the absence of opposition parties. The National Peasant party had been suppressed and the independent Socialists did not enter candidates. The new National Assembly speedily approved of the government's draft constitution, which borrowed wholesale the principal provisions of the Soviet, Yugoslav, and Bulgarian constitutions.† The final step

\* For the full text of the abdication proclamation and the Rumanian government's proclamation to the people, cf. Appendix, pages 311–313.

† The technical details of these contemporary Danubian constitutions are fully analyzed in Chapters VI (Yugoslavia) and VII (Bulgaria).

in erecting the legal structure of a people's republic was Petru Groza's re-election as prime minister. He had headed Rumania's government ever since its liberation from the Nazis and, as a reward for his faithful services to Communism, in April 1948 he was appointed by the Grand National Assembly to the premiership of a new "republican" (Communist) cabinet. The single-party character of the Rumanian state fully asserted itself in the composition of this government. Officially all of its portfolios were held by the United Workers' party, which had displaced other groups since November 1947 and established a tight control over every aspect of national administration.

#### CIVIL LIBERTIES, PRESS, AND PROPAGANDA

Following the example of neighboring Danubian countries, the civil liberties of postwar Rumania are *theoretically* well defined and carefully safeguarded. In actual practice, violations of the law were frequent and some of the most important constitutional rights were infringed upon in the process of establishing the present structure of government. Early in 1945, after the installation in office of the six-party coalition government, several important legal reforms were carried out. Elaborate electoral laws were drafted, and Rumanian citizens could again cast their ballots, after being deprived of this fundamental right for about nine years. Women were given the franchise and the right to hold office on the same basis as men.

Another major change brought about by the early coalition government was the abolishment of racial and religious discrimination among Rumanian nationals. The comprehensive law of nationalities of February 7, 1945, provides in its Article I that "all Rumanian citizens are equal before the law and benefit of the same civic and political rights without discrimination as to race, nationality, language or religion." This broad statement was then implemented by a decree law of August 1945, which established severe punishment for persons infringing on other people's civil liberties in any way, and particularly for those who "make defamatory declarations or assertions likely to bring about hatred or contempt against a race, nationality or religion." Similar but more detailed laws were passed to restore full religious liberty both to the two officially established religions, the Rumanian Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches, and to Roman Catholics, Protestants, Unitarians, Baptists, and Mohammedans. Additional guarantees involved the exercise of basic rights vitally significant in the domestic politics of a country—freedom of the press, freedom of speech, and freedom of



association. Probably the most complete bill of rights was introduced and submitted to the electorate by Groza's Plowmen's Front in November 1946. This "platform of the bloc of democratic parties" reads like the final synthesis, the composite product of the provisions of the bills of rights of all major European constitutions. Although seldom observed, its provisions were proudly accepted as part of "the program of the new Parliament, the mere reading of which explains . . . the success of the government in the elections."<sup>16</sup> \*

The hiatus between the theoretical formulation of civil rights and their practical, everyday observance was so disturbingly wide and obvious that both the British and the American governments repeatedly expressed their concern over the drastic curtailment of civil liberties. Most of these flagrant violations occurred during the process of liquidating the political parties of the opposition, reforming the cabinet, and abolishing the institution of monarchy. Legally Anglo-American intervention was based on the recent "satellite" peace treaty with Rumania which in Article 3 expressly provided for the guarantee of human rights. Paradoxically, the Rumanian government seems to have infringed upon the very same fundamental freedoms which are carefully enumerated in the treaty—the freedoms of expression, press and publication, religious worship, political opinion, and public meeting. In its note of June 24, 1947, addressed to the Rumanian foreign minister, the United States State Department firmly protested the "arbitrary arrest without warrant or charge of hundreds of Opposition Party and non-party persons and the indefinite detention of such individuals in prisons and concentration camps under reportedly deplorable conditions." The note reasserts the official opinion of the United States government that evident deprivations of the most elemental human rights and freedoms, as occurred in Rumania in 1946 and 1947, were in clear conflict with Article 3 of the peace treaty which the Rumanian government had signed. Similar juridical arguments were used by the British Foreign Office, which charged as recently as February 1948 that rights and freedoms guaranteed by the peace treaty and by previous assurances "have been and continue to be violated both in the letter and in the spirit." The British note pointed out particularly that the National Peasant party had been suppressed and that other opposition parties had been forced to suspend activities, that the opposition press had been constrained to cease publication, and that illegal arrests were continuing. A situation is thus created, concludes the note,

\* For full text, cf. Appendix, pages 306-307.

which is a "breach of the treaty obligations of the Rumanian government and [at odds] with assurances given by Dr. Petru Groza in January, 1946."<sup>17</sup> As Rumania's political leaders consistently rejected these notes of protest, claiming unwarranted interference in the internal affairs of the country, the charges were never discussed publicly nor was evidence to the contrary introduced to defend the government's case. One of the best clues to the full appraisal of civil liberties or their absence can be gained from a survey of the postwar press and the propaganda machinery motivating and guiding it.

The postwar period has been generally characterized by three types of publications, government newspapers, opposition papers, and a few independent organs. Most of these are published in the capital city, Bucharest. Each of the six major political parties in the former government coalition had its own official paper which carried the weight and influence of the group behind it. *Scanteia* (Spark) of the Communists, *Libertatea* of the Social Democrats, and *Frontul Plugarilor* of the Plowmen's Front have been the most vocal in propagandizing the policies of the national administration. Their importance and aggressiveness increased gradually as official action against the recalcitrant opposition became sharper. The Communist press has gained considerably, both in the number of publications and in its control over public opinion. Such formerly independent organs as *Romania Libera*, founded by the eminent liberal statesman Grigore Gafencu now in exile, have joined the ranks of extreme leftist publications. The government press closely follows the ideological dictates of party leadership; attacks against the "imperialist West" are as common as a scathing criticism of all domestic opposition. In January 1948 the Bucharest daily *Semnalul* bitterly denounced the United States as reluctant to help a starving Europe. "In the United States there are mountains of food supplies but the majestic dollar requires protracted negotiations over high prices. Meanwhile mothers are driven crazy by the cries of their hungry children." In a December 1947 issue the Bucharest evening paper *Ultima Ora* categorically stated that all opposition papers were necessarily "blinded by fanaticism," had made harmful insinuations regarding the members of government, were fighting the prestige of the crown, and, in general, were "slinging mud at the throne under the pretext of its being disagreeable to the Government."<sup>18</sup>

This attitude has not helped to foster the growth of virile and self-reliant opposition publications. Until the latter part of 1947, Maniu's paper, the official daily newspaper of the National Peasant party,

*Dreptatea* (*Justice*) was leader of the dwindling opposition. In addition to this paper published in Bucharest, the Peasant party also had two well-known publications in Transylvania. In retrospect the political line assumed by *Dreptatea* seems bold and outspoken indeed. As late as April 1947, it described Maniu's position in Rumania in the following terms: "A statesman of such uncommon stature, whose abilities were first demonstrated on the European horizon, and subsequently internationally, cannot be condemned to waste his activities in an isolated sphere." The challenge by opposition papers of this type was not tolerated passively and for long. As a warning signal, governmental authorization was summarily withdrawn from several publications, others were refused newsprint when it became impossible, according to government spokesmen, to provide with paper the twenty-nine daily newspapers regularly appearing in Bucharest. In the statement of Minister of Information Livezeanu, these drastic restrictions were only temporary and would not affect the freedom of the press. Nevertheless, when a fairly mild article attacking Minister of National Economy Gheorghiu-Dej was published in Maniu's *Dreptatea*, its author was sentenced to six months' imprisonment and heavily fined. Rumania's only official radio station, *Romania Libera*, joined in the government's nationwide struggle against the opposition and thus enlarged the scope of the propaganda campaign. In the spring of 1947 frequent bulletins were broadcast describing and predicting a close similarity in the ultimate fate of the Maniu party in Rumania and that of Mikolajczyk's Peasant party in Poland. An analogous pattern of gradual silencing and muzzling was applied to other opposition papers, particularly to the leading press organ of the National-Liberal party, *Liberalul*. Independent publications did not fare much better. They were allowed to exist only as long as they assumed a progovernment attitude or, in a few isolated cases, remained politically colorless and disinterested. Their number was never very large, and most of the independent periodicals were published in Bucharest, where government supervision was always a simple matter. In comparison with the fully authoritarian prewar regimes, the press, on the whole, is less restricted and somewhat freer today. While its products are strictly controlled, there is still more color, variety, and subtle opposition present than in the thoroughly emasculated skeleton publications of neighboring Yugoslavia. Its freedom of movement and range of expression are, of course, limited by the burden of official censorship, which has curtailed the newsprint supply and tightened the editorial activities of opposition papers. In that respect

the postwar pattern of Danubian Europe has almost completely unfolded in Rumania.

### ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION

Agriculture in Rumania is less a form of economic enterprise than a way of life. The harvest is probably the most important single item in her entire economy. The bad harvests of three successive years (1944–1946) have precipitated starvation in several key provinces, raising the danger of physical extinction for a sizable part of the population. By 1946 Rumanian crops were not quite 30 per cent of the normal volume, and conditions were so terrible that emergency measures had to be taken to feed the people. Because of a long drought and resulting crop failures over two million people were caught in the famine-stricken areas. Paradoxically, the country's breadbasket and probably richest province, Moldavia, was the hardest hit. In spite of a mass exodus from the doomed province, thousands of people died of starvation. The government established special committees of relief which evacuated women and children into more fortunate districts and provinces, arranged for the forcible collection of grain throughout the country, and fought the ubiquitous black market.

Both the United States and the Soviet Union provided help in the form of food supplies. President Truman decreed the sending of 7000 tons of goods to feed people in the starvation areas, and the U.S.S.R. diverted some of its grain supply in the Black Sea region, sending it to Moldavia. Generous outside support was a vital factor in the ultimate conquest of this economic disaster. Yet the Rumanian press was quick to point out that American aid, amounting to over \$3,500,000, was attached to two basic conditions while Soviet assistance was unconditional. The American government had insisted that its supplies must be distributed without racial or national discrimination, and that United States personnel was to supervise the distribution itself. This technical difference clearly proved to the Communist press of Bucharest that "*only the USSR has complete confidence in Groza's government.*"<sup>19</sup> \*

A major factor retarding reconstruction has been the loss of about 800,000 able-bodied persons as civilian and military casualties in a population estimated at 15,000,000. The damage of World War II, bringing widespread physical destruction; a large-scale removal of factory plants and implements first by the Germans, then by the Russians; and a severe reduction in transport facilities—all these further

\* Italics mine.

contributed to the serious economic crisis which appeared after the cessation of military operations. Agricultural and industrial output decreased sharply, and even in official government estimates general production in 1946 was only 48 per cent of that of 1939, and was actually smaller than in 1945. Economic causes then led to widespread social troubles, to a state of popular dissatisfaction and mistrust common to all social categories. For a few months labor unions acted as the spearhead of opposition to the government. Official propaganda was intensified, requesting the workers to improve discipline, and asking the trade unions for help. Government officials urged the workers to "respect regulations and technical hierarchy, to increase production and economise with raw materials." A bill for labor discipline was finally introduced by the new Communist minister of industry and commerce.

This chain of serious difficulties brought up the necessity of immediate and far-reaching crisis legislation. A comprehensive stabilization bill was passed by Parliament in April 1946 providing for the fixing of prices and wages. It gave the minister of national economy authority to adjust prices and wages "in accordance with economic conditions." Under the terms of the law the government instituted negotiations between factory owners, industrialists, and the trade unions aiming toward new collective contracts. No new wage and price level could be established in an inflationary economy based on a fluctuating and uncertain currency. The next step, therefore, was a monetary reform which stabilized the leu by withdrawing from circulation all previous bank notes and coins, and issuing new currency at the exchange rate of 20,000 old lei for one stabilized leu. The complicated provisions of the monetary reform were not fully elaborated and enforced until August, 1947. By that time inflation was fairly well controlled and government spokesmen claimed that currency stabilization meant better living conditions for about 14 million peasants and workers whose income or wages were increased from 100 to 300 per cent compared with 1938. Middle wage brackets apparently remained unchanged while top wage brackets were reduced by 50 per cent.

During the extended process of carrying out monetary reform measures the key economic office of the country, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, was thoroughly reorganized under the leadership of Communist Gheorghiu-Dej. The ministry was entrusted with the task of drawing up a production schedule based on anticipated national production projects. Feverish economic blueprinting resulted in a detailed "economic and financial rehabilitation plan" which was sub-

mitted to the cabinet in June 1947 on behalf of the Communist party and adopted unanimously by all groups represented in the Council of Ministers. This six months' program provided for new production goals for the oil, coal, and steel industries, which were to reach a rate of at least 60 to 70 per cent of the prewar output. It also wanted to provide agriculture with tools and modern mechanical equipment, extend earlier land reforms,\* restore the country's badly damaged system of transportation, and achieve a balanced budget by means of planned production and drastic antiprofitereing laws. These impressive objectives were to be fulfilled by the end of 1947. Administration of the plan was handed to a newly established intergovernmental commission, which was given full powers for the organization, control, and execution of all measures connected with the plan. The commission centered around four Communist members of the cabinet who already had broad economic powers and were now given policy-making authority in the new body. One of the first official actions of the commission was to outline a comprehensive four-year plan for agriculture. Beginning in 1948, this long-range program envisaged increased food-stuffs for home consumption, adequate new supplies for the industries using agricultural produce, as well as some surplus for export. The official text of the plan emphasized the need for progress in the rationalization of farming and the preservation of the soil. Significantly it stated that between 1935 and 1939 nearly 83 per cent of the country's arable land was devoted to cereals, between 1942 and 1946 this percentage rose to 97, while in 1947 only 78 per cent was sown with cereals. By 1951 this percentage would have to be restricted to about 71. Reduction of primary crops would then have to be accompanied by an extension of more specialized agricultural produce.

Obviously, the ambitious and far-reaching plans of the Rumanian government have always depended on outside support and have, in turn, been directly influenced by the aggressive economic policies of neighboring states. The imperialist attitudes of European powers found a suitable outlet and ready victim in this country of enormous natural wealth. Its rich deposits of oil, natural gas, minerals, and metals, its abundance of timber resources have practically predestined it to function as an extractive economy in the service of rapidly industrializing, militaristic nations. The most vivid illustration of this economy of ex-

\* The land reform carried out between 1945 and 1947 broke up all large estates and distributed the land to farmers and peasants, leaving a maximum of 125 acres in the hands of each original owner.

plotation was the German-Rumanian trade agreement signed in March 1939. Its clauses were the result of an ultimatum from Nazi Germany demanding a monopoly of Rumanian foreign trade and a suppression of her industries, thus forging almost unbreakable commercial ties between the two countries. This so-called Wohltat Agreement provided for the intensification of food production, the cultivation of new crops, and the development of timber and mining. New German machinery was imported, and *mixed Rumanian-German companies* were established for the exploitation of oil, petroleum products, chrome ores, manganese, and bauxite. Detailed provisions were made for the collaboration of the two countries in the industrial and financial spheres; German credits were granted to develop Rumanian resources and to induce a further expansion of purchases from Germany.

These negotiations are significant in setting the pattern for postwar economic developments. In place of a German treaty, a Soviet-Rumanian agreement defined the present framework for exploitation. Concluded in February 1947, it provided for an exchange of commodities in the value of 15 million dollars and a 10-million-dollar credit to Rumania, which was to obtain industrial equipment and raw materials necessary for her textile and metallurgical industries. Soon after that date the first Sovrom (Soviet-Rumanian) trusts were established to implement the agreement. Today they control almost all the country's resources in oil (Sovrom Petrol), timber (Sovromlemm), maritime services (Sovrom Transport), commercial air lines (TARS), and most of its export-import trade (Sovrom Banc). So far they have operated "as a one-way conveyor belt for exports to Russia."<sup>20</sup> If oil and timber are to be exported from Rumania, these transactions require Russia's approval through one of the several Sovrom trusts. Soviet decisions have come to play a vital part in all domestic and foreign economic issues. When the Rumanian government categorically rejected the Marshall Plan, it was pointed out that Sovrom companies were the logical alternative as the means of participating in a new Molotov Plan. These companies rapidly acquired every possible official advantage and gradually squeezed out companies which were not streamlined on this 50-50 basis of "international cooperation."

Soviet economic infiltration in the form of state-directed trusts and mixed companies raised the serious problem of nationalizing key industries. As almost 85 per cent of the country's industries are foreign-owned, wholesale nationalization would create trouble with several of the creditor countries.<sup>21</sup> However, the Malaxa Steel Works of Bucha-

rest, largest native industrial enterprise, has been nationalized and put under Soviet control. Premier Groza ominously stated as early as February 1946 that "naturally, all institutions will move toward a directed economy and Rumanian banks will be transformed into institutions *designed to serve the whole nation rather than private speculators*. . . ." In this setting came the enactment of the so-called Industrial Offices Bill (May 24, 1947), which authorized the establishment of government offices for the close regulation of every phase of industry and trade, with the single exception of petroleum. This authorization paved the way for a large-scale nationalization of industries. In June 1948 the government announced the expropriation of nearly all industries, including banks, mines, insurance companies, and major transport and communications systems. The only firms excluded from the nationalization order were "mixed" companies formed on the basis of bilateral agreements with foreign countries. Obviously the Soviet Union is the only country owning such plants in Rumania.

In foreign trade relations the economic collaboration agreement with the U.S.S.R. set the pace and determined the general orientation. Rumania then concluded trade pacts with its Eastern European neighbors, particularly with governments where the Communist trend was equally assertive and obvious, as in Bulgaria and Poland. Under the comprehensive agreement reached with Poland in December 1947, an exchange of goods worth 20 million dollars annually began in January 1948. Less detailed commercial treaties were concluded with Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, and France. The Rumanian government also prepared to resume relations with Great Britain and the United States. In an unusually optimistic vein Gheorghiu-Dej stated in February 1947: "We are firmly convinced that within a short time we shall be in a position of resuming trade relations with other countries, especially with the United States and Great Britain, and that from this collaboration real benefits will result for both parties." Subsequently rumors circulated in Bucharest to the effect that Washington had granted a 50-million-dollar loan to Rumania for a period of four years. Because of a rapid deterioration in the political relations of the two countries these rumors had no basis in fact. By the summer of 1947 both American and British trade talks in Bucharest were suspended and commercial relations have never been restored. Gradually, stern Western notes of diplomatic protest began to displace previous loan negotiations and the economic hopes of the Rumanian

\* Italics mine.



government turned fully toward Moscow. Since then a steady and inevitable economic rapprochement has helped to bolster the country's Eastern political orientation.

### THE FOREIGN POLICIES OF POSTWAR RUMANIA

In the course of the last thirty years Rumania became successively tied to three different foreign political systems. Because she is forever dependent on the support of economically powerful states, her relationships usually involved political collaboration in the capacity of a vassal state. Yet in 1918 Rumania appeared to have shining prospects, and her opportunities were better than those of any of her Danubian neighbors. She had doubled her territory, acquired almost inexhaustible new natural resources, and had several able statesmen and a numerous people of hard-working peasants. Rumanian success at the Versailles Peace Conferences was due primarily to the increasing panic about Bolshevism. In the struggle against Soviet Russia, Rumania seemed to be a logical and valuable ally, a strategic bridgehead in the ideological conflict between East and West. "For the following twenty years," observes Hugh Seton-Watson, "Rumanian statesmen cleverly exploited the Bolshevik bogey to extract material benefits from Western Powers."<sup>22</sup> Through the Little Entente and by means of direct military and cultural agreements, the country was tied firmly to France and served as the easternmost exponent of Franco-British interests.

Under increasing German pressure in the nineteen thirties, first economic life, then internal politics began to veer toward the side of the European Axis. Rich oil wells and the Danube Delta acted as real magnets for Germany, which gained one major concession after another. The unhappy fact that Rumania lay in the direct line of a German advance toward the Soviet Union and the Near East practically sealed her fate. In June 1940, heyday of the Soviet-Nazi alliance engineered by Molotov and Ribbentrop in 1939, the Soviet government suddenly delivered an ultimatum to Bucharest, demanding the two key eastern provinces of Bessarabia and Bucovina. Rumania yielded to force without resistance and was increasingly caught by the diplomatic vise, the geopolitically perfect double-pincer movement, which brought the German army to her western borders and simultaneously established Soviet Russia at the mouth of the Danube, a long step closer to the Dardanelles. Foreign pressures and an Iron Guard regime at home completed the separation from the West and speeded up the fascist *Gleichschaltung* of domestic politics. In September 1940 General An-

tonescu proudly stated: "Rumania, *on her own initiative*, has entered the political sphere of Germany and Italy. Consequently, it is not permissible to attack the Axis Powers. *With regard to the Western Powers an attitude of reserve must be maintained.*"\* In the next few months the Antonescu government rapidly altered its "attitude of reserve" and, joining the war on Hitler's side, embarked on a course of active hostility against Great Britain, France, the United States, and the Soviet Union.

The disastrous period of alliance with the Axis was dramatically terminated in the middle of 1944, when the armistice between the Big Three and Rumania reoriented her entire political life. The third major phase in recent foreign policies, a satellite relationship to the Soviet Union, had its inception with the coup of 1944 which gave adequate political basis for occupation by the Red army. Since then the Rumanian government has been guided by the complementary twin principles of subservience to the great Eastern neighbor and vigorous participation in a Sovietized Danubian Europe. Subservience to the Soviet Union was clearly illustrated by the unanimous ratification of the peace treaty, in spite of its damaging features and several unfavorable clauses. Under Russian pressure the Rumanian Parliament accepted the treaty in August 1947 with a vote of 224 to 0. Interestingly, ratification was first proposed by representatives of the Communist party, who felt that "the internal and external situation was favorable for this great act." Parliamentary speakers generally agreed that Rumania owed the victory of her cause not only to its justice, but also to the permanent and wholehearted support granted to her by the U.S.S.R.

One of the few constructive features of the Groza regime has been its effort to establish friendly relations with neighboring countries. The marked postwar rapprochements between Hungary and Rumania, between Bulgaria and Rumania have terminated centuries of belligerent estrangement and temporarily becalmed aggressive territorial designs in several key areas of Danubia. In his 1948 New Year's message to the Rumanian people Groza could point out with some satisfaction that "we concluded trade and cultural treaties with the governments of Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland. The year 1947 closed with an event of great importance, . . . through the conclusion of a Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between Rumania and Yugoslavia."<sup>23</sup> These policies of friendship have several obvious drawbacks sharply limiting their potential usefulness in the permanent reorganization of Central and Eastern

\* Italics mine.

Europe. They apply only to neighboring *democratic* countries, in the strictest Soviet interpretation of this much-tortured expression. Furthermore, the promotion of good-neighbor policies is merely a secondary objective. The primary task now seems to be the safeguarding of Communist interests on a regional basis, combined with the speedy transformation of Rumania into a full-fledged and reliable "people's republic."<sup>24</sup>

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER V

1. A. D. Xenopol, *Les Roumains* (Paris, 1909). A similar characterization is included in Professor Mitrany's excellent *Rumania, Her History and Politics* (London, 1915), p. 34 *et seq.*
2. Sebastien Popesco, *La Constitution Roumaine du 27 Février 1938 et ses principes* (Paris, 1939), p. 61 *et seq.*
3. Quoted in full by George C. Logio, in *Rumania, Its History, Politics and Economics* (Manchester, 1932), pp. 59-60.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
5. Tatarescu's reluctant inclusion in the government of Petru Groza created definite difficulties right from the beginning. "Tatarescu himself openly advocated freer initiative in industry and trade than can be agreeable to Groza, Patrascanu and their friends," states Balcanicus in his article "Rumania before Recognition," *The Central European Observer*, Jan. 18, 1946, p. 21.
6. László Szenczei, "Románia a választások után" ("Rumania after the Elections"), *Új Magyarország* (Budapest), Jan. 18, 1947, p. 4.
7. "Purge of the Plowmen's Front," *East Europe*, May 7, 1947, p. 12.
8. Cf. "Rumania in the Bag," *The Economist*, Nov. 15, 1947, p. 792, offering a brief analysis of the country's political conversion-process; cf. also Victor Cornea, "And Now Dr. Maniu," *The Tablet*, Oct. 4, 1947, pp. 212-213, which describes the Maniu trial as a process of "engineered disruption."
9. U. S. Department of State note concerning the trial of Juliu Maniu, Washington, November 1947.
10. Balázs Bernát, "Tatarescu Bukása" ("The Downfall of Tatarescu"), *Haladás* (Budapest), Nov. 13, 1947, p. 2.
11. These official communiqués are quoted in full in *East Europe*, Nov. 27, 1947, p. 8 *et seq.*
12. The political fortunes of Bodnaras are ably discussed by W. H. Lawrence, "Communist Rules Army in Rumania," *The New York Times*, Dec. 24, 1947.

13. The party program was issued on November 12, 1947, and is reproduced in detail in *East Europe*, Nov. 27, 1947. Cf. "King Michael and the Communists," *ibid.*; also Appendix, pages 308-310.
14. The traditional force of monarchy, as an institution, is well summarized by C. U. Clark in his sourcebook, *United Roumania* (New York, 1932). "A long continuance of hard times, or a conspicuous failure of Parliament and King to meet squarely the tremendous problems facing Rumania, may possibly lead . . . to a dictatorship and a subsequent republic. *The Rumanian people seem more inclined to a constitutional monarchy*, nor is the king involved with powerful ecclesiastical and aristocratic interests. *The Rumanian monarchy and monarch are closer to their people even than the British*. Perhaps all European monarchies are doomed."—*Ibid.*, p. 335. (Italics mine.)
15. "Ex-King Michael," *The Economist*, Jan. 3, 1948, p. 9.
16. *Rumanian Review* (Bucharest), Nos. 8-9, Jan. 1947, pp. 17-18, under the title "The Electoral Battle." Cf. also Appendix, pages 306-307.
17. "Britain Protests on Rumanian Pact," *The New York Times*, Feb. 4, 1948; for earlier notes of protest by the American government, cf. "Concern over Drastic Deprivation of Civil Liberties in Rumania," *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. XVII, No. 418, July 6, 1947, p. 38.
18. Both quotes are from *East Europe*; cf. issues of January 29, 1948, and December 18, 1947, respectively.
19. "Famine in Moldavia," *East Europe*, March 5, 1947, p. 6 *et seq.*
20. "The Rumanian Political Scene," *The World Today*, May 1947, p. 215.
21. Samuel L. Sharp, *Nationalization of Key Industries in Eastern Europe*, Foundation for Foreign Affairs, Pamphlet No. 1, pp. 26-27.
22. Hugh Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe between the Wars, 1918-1941*, p. 198.
23. *Romanian News*, Jan. 1948, No. 1, p. 5. For the treaty itself, cf. Appendix, pages 316-318. When the Cominform broke with Tito's regime (June 1948), the Rumanian government in effect repudiated its comprehensive treaty alliance with Yugoslavia and faithfully followed the dictates of the Soviet Communist party.
24. To students of Rumanian history her sudden emergence as an aggressive Communist state is a distinct surprise bordering on a political miracle. Professor Nicholas Iorga, one of the great figures of Rumanian literary life, authoritatively stated as recently as 1932 that Communism in his country had only a few hundred adherents in certain isolated provinces. "I cannot be certain," he concluded his lecture, "that Bolshevism will not reach London or New York, but I am sure that it will not be by way of Rumania." Cf. N. Iorga, *My American Lectures* (Bucharest, 1932), pp. 86-87.

## VI • Yugoslavia

It is generally agreed today that Yugoslavia is the strongest single military power in the Danubian area, with *relatively* the most stable form of government. Political stability in this case does not imply that the present regime is either democratic by Western standards or satisfactory as a permanent structure in the heart of Central Europe. Behind the transparent façade of a People's Front the government of Marshal Tito is firmly entrenched, rigidly controlling every aspect of the country's political life and economic activities. Misled by these superficial ideological features, some students of European politics are prone to assume that Yugoslav history actually began with Tito. They feel that his ascendancy is a chapter by itself, divorced from the complicated past and uncertain future of the country. In spite of its unnatural elements, the postwar Yugoslav state presents a definite and intelligible phase in the political evolution of the South Slavs.

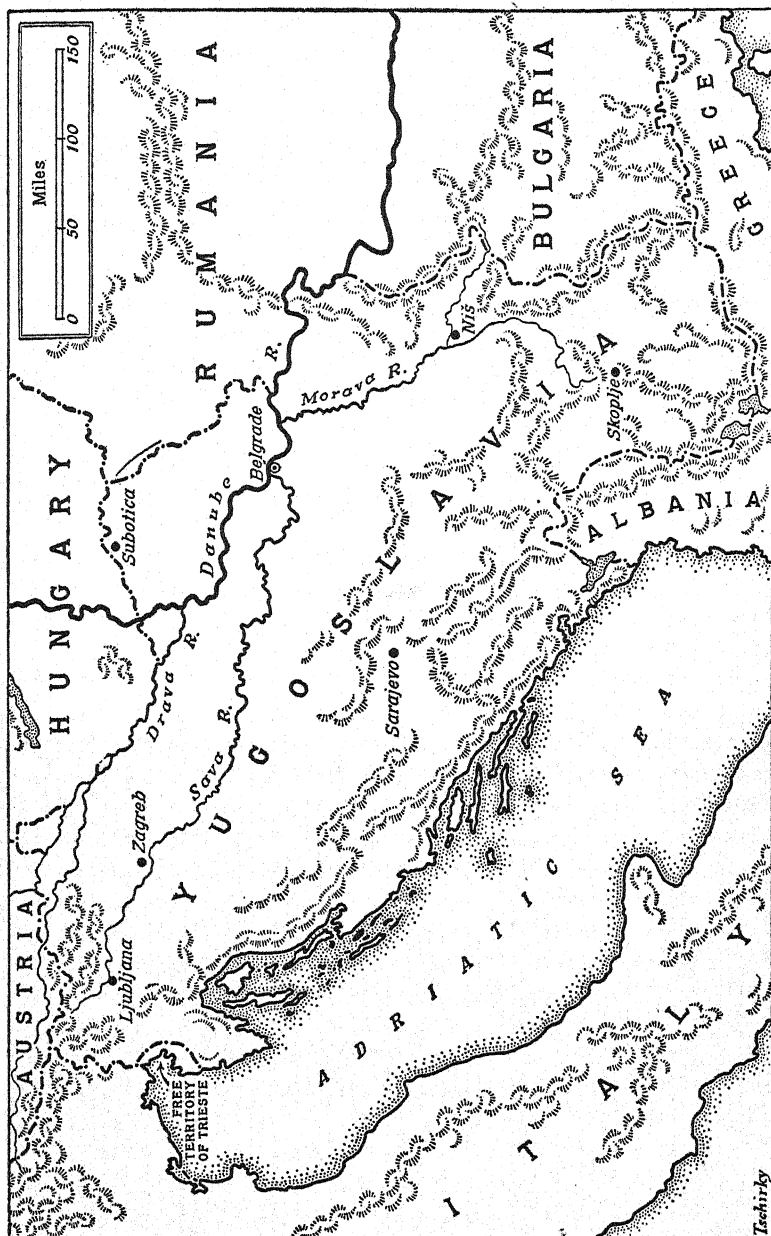
### PREWAR DEVELOPMENTS

The Kingdom of Yugoslavia, conceived at Versailles, was based on the twin foundations of a more or less common language, and the feeling of a Slavic unity which has steadily increased throughout recent centuries and seized its first real opportunity with the long-expected breakup of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Linguistically the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, three groups representing about 83 per cent of the country's population, are fairly closely related and able to communicate with each other more successfully than are the Czechs and Slovaks. The sense of South Slav unity manifested itself forcefully during the Balkan Wars and was climaxed by World War I, which seemed to point toward a Greater Serbia based on a union of all Slavs around the Mediterranean Basin. Against these unifying features there were several significant factors of disunity. Serbia was the only part of the country which had existed in the past as a politically independent country, the only one of the three nations with a considerable experi-

ence of statecraft and military organization. Differences of historical background and national aspirations account for the problem of uniting Serbs and Croats within the framework of one state.\* Religion is responsible for a further split of Yugoslavia. The northern and western parts of the country, including Croatia itself, are predominantly Catholic, but the Serbian regions of east and south are Orthodox. These two sectors are then separated by a considerable Moslem population in the central provinces of Bosnia and Macedonia. The basic differences in creed were enhanced by outside pressures of a widely varied type. The cultural outlook of Croats and Slovenes was conditioned by centuries of subjection to the Habsburg monarchy, by the close social and commercial intercourse with Austrians and Hungarians. While these two groups were oriented toward Vienna, Italy exerted persistent influence on the historically significant coast of Dalmatia, where the abundance of excellent harbors led to the early development of lively urban centers. Simultaneously a strong Turkish legacy still lingered in Bosnia, Macedonia, and surrounding provinces, where the impact of the Orient was direct and all-pervasive. Modern Yugoslavia thus emerges as a synthetic product situated at the crossroads of three sweeping historic movements and optimistically based on the association of three different Southern Slav communities.

Although elaborate constitutional documents, establishing the new kingdom in 1918 and 1919, proclaimed it a parliamentary democracy under the leadership of a new Serbian dynasty, the numerous differences and forces of disunity prevented long-range internal stability. The first twenty years of the country's independent existence were occupied by the incessant fights, wrangling, and intrigue of the different parties and regional pressure groups. These harmful maneuvers were accentuated by the negative policies of Croat leaders, who for several years refused to form a coalition with the more liberal elements among Serb politicians. This reluctance to cooperate merely strengthened the influence of the capital, Belgrade, and assured the supremacy of Serbia over the entire country. By 1929 the ever-faithful government party not only had won several national elections, which were increasingly subject to police interference, but had also created a situation in which "corruption permeated the administration to an alarming extent."<sup>1</sup> The crisis finally broke with King Alexander's sudden procla-

\* The geographical and historical forces affecting the successful existence of Yugoslavia as a modern state are briefly analyzed in Chapter I, under the heading of "Ethnic Background."



mation of his military dictatorship in January 1929. While the king was personally well liked, his arbitrary and absolutist methods contributed to the steady deterioration of domestic politics. The iron centralization of governmental functions in Serbian hands antagonized the Croats and Slovenes, whose desperate resistance, in turn, called for sharp measures of police repression. The Croats, who had enjoyed a considerable measure of local autonomy in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, deeply resented the attempts of the Serbs, whom they have always regarded as a less civilized people, to subject them to the absolutist rule of an undemocratic state. They constantly expressed their predilection and hope for a decentralized federal state-structure; toward Serbia their attitude was one of defensive aloofness, the psychology of the weaker party. As C. A. Macartney observes, this psychology alone would have made them excessively difficult to handle, even for a far more tactful people than the Serbs.<sup>2</sup> Although the coercive measures adopted by the dictatorship fomented widespread terrorist activities, responsible Croat leaders never actually advocated the dissolution of Yugoslavia. Along with republicanism, decentralization, and immediate social reforms, they stood for the organization of a true Slav federation. Thus they hoped to secure a satisfactory degree of local autonomy as well as political and civil rights.

Prewar Yugoslav policy toward other national minority groups was equally repressive, although the Germans were treated less brusquely than the Magyars or Rumanians. The two latter groups were not even granted the right to vote and were unable to organize their own political parties. Voters of these minorities were so consistently terrorized by Serbian nationalists that they soon abandoned the idea of independent political representation. In 1929 the dictatorship officially dissolved all minority parties and with its arbitrary electoral reforms and elimination of civil rights drove their key leaders into underground opposition. Even then the prewar regimes insisted on playing off one minority group against the other, merely increasing their innate irredentist and revisionist tendencies. While German culture was more or less tolerated in the northern regions of the country, the Magyars had a hard time under Serbian rule. Yugoslavia was never keen to see Hungarian culture or influence flourish and, of course, the Magyar settlers themselves constantly advocated disruptive revisionist ideas, seldom dissociating politics from cultural or economic problems. These basic disagreements helped to impair Yugoslav-Hungarian relations in the interwar period and, in general, affected unfavorably the country's



position with respect to Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Rumania. It was the tragedy of prewar Yugoslavia that it had to include the three former states of Serbia, Croatia, and Montenegro, the two former Austro-Hungarian provinces of Slovenia and Dalmatia, the autonomous province of Bosnia-Hercegovina, the two predominantly Magyar regions of Bácska and Bánát, and three border districts which formerly belonged to Bulgaria. The task of offering a satisfactory central government to these fragmented and scattered zones of diverging traditions and interests was almost impossible from the very beginning of independent statehood. As a result of such overwhelming initial difficulties, it is clear today that throughout the bitter years of the 1930's the treatment of minority groups established a working precedent for the dictatorial political system of the present.

Another crucial issue of the interwar period was the foreign political orientation of the country which, for several years, was based on a close military alliance with France and constructive membership in the Little Entente, the Balkan Entente, and the League of Nations. The earliest sources of danger appeared in the form of power pressures from Germany and Italy, and the strong revisionist claims of Hungary and Bulgaria. In the early nineteen thirties an additional issue of potential conflict was raised when a restoration of the Habsburg dynasty to the thrones of Austria and Hungary was threatened. The year 1933 marked the highest degree of solidarity within the two groupings of Central European and Balkan nations. In February the three countries of the Little Entente—Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia—promised to participate in joint action against Austria and Hungary in the event of a Habsburg restoration or an attempted revision of the Versailles treaty system. Simultaneously the Balkan Entente reached a defensive understanding with respect to the maintenance of the *status quo* in Southeastern Europe. This agreement was particularly meaningful because the Balkan Entente at this time included, in addition to the three Little Entente countries, Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece, and Albania.

By 1934 Yugoslavia gradually turned away from France, which could no longer offer her unlimited economic aid. This shift also involved a general abandonment of the Western orientation which marked the preceding decade. The most serious blow against the close and important alliance with France was struck at Marseilles, where, on October 9, 1934, King Alexander and French Foreign Minister Barthou were murdered in cold blood by a Croat terrorist. The Mar-

seilles murders precipitated a grave political crisis in Yugoslavia and directly affected Europe's major diplomatic alignments. Popular suspicion focused on Italy and Hungary, which reportedly trained a Croat terrorist group, *Ustasha*, and neither of which would have lamented the disruption of Yugoslavia. The internal difficulties and confusion precipitated by King Alexander's death forced Yugoslavia into the adoption of policies which eventually spelled disaster for the country's political and economic independence. Under several fascist-minded prime ministers, who temporarily filled the constitutional vacuum left by the monarch's death, the regime followed the erroneous general principle of "friendship with all, dependence upon none." It abruptly abandoned former alliances and engaged instead in a rapprochement with Germany and Italy and in friendly relations with the Axis powers; it also granted dubious economic concessions to Hungary and Bulgaria. These unpopular moves increased the ideological rift between government and opposition. Various cabinets competed with each other in obvious appeasement policies which appealed only to a limited segment of the population—primarily to the urban classes, which benefited from increased foreign trade and thus enjoyed the brief illusion of a Nazi-encouraged prosperity.

The last pro-Axis government of the pre-war era was overthrown in the sudden popular revolution of March 1941, when a historic *coup d'état* offered a moment of military resistance to Axis invasion.<sup>3</sup> The spontaneous uprising of the Yugoslav people came in the form of a swift reaction against the Axis-allied regency of Prince Paul, who only two days earlier had signed a Tripartite Pact putting his country fully into the Axis camp. This agreement also gave the German army permission to march across the country at a time when Hitler's divisions were poised on the borders of Yugoslavia. Although sudden in its execution, the coup was well prepared and carefully organized. Native fascist leaders were spirited out of the country and a completely new cabinet took over the government under General Simovich, commander of the air force. It is important to note that Yugoslav Communists did not participate in this revolution, although they have subsequently attempted to claim some credit for it. Until June 1941, in fact, they faithfully followed the party line: urging cooperation with Germany, and depicting the war as a clash between two groups of capitalist powers equally exposed to the evils of imperialism. Nor did the scattered Communist elements play much part in the ensuing military phase, the country's brief resistance, collapse, and partition by the Germans.

The extreme ferocity of Nazi occupation policies helped to cement the first Partisan movement of national resistance. Northern and southern Slovenia were absorbed into the Reich, Croatia and Bosnia were split off and formed into an "independent" Croat state, Baranya, Bácska and Medjumurje were annexed by Hungary, Dalmatia was surrendered to dreaded Italian occupation, while southeastern Serbia and eastern Macedonia were handed over to Bulgaria. In the province of Bánát and in Serbia proper a generally despised Serb quisling government was established by German occupation officials. To a people dazed by military defeat, tired of the reactionary old regimes and corrupt ruling cliques, the Communists offered a new rallying point which no other group or political party proved capable of providing. After June 1941, the Communists also enjoyed the reflected prestige of the Soviet Union locked in a death struggle with Nazi Germany. Thus they won leadership of the resistance movement, with the people giving them assurance of complete domination. The present leftist dictatorship was originally developed on the foundations of this emotional capital of popular acceptance and temporary enthusiasm.

Years of oppressive foreign occupation failed to extinguish the spirit of freedom among the South Slavs, and the unity of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was actually cemented by the brutality and "government by revenge" of Germans and Italians. Two well-known resistance movements emerged in Yugoslavia during World War II, one led by the late Draža Mihailovich and the other by Josip Broz Tito. The former's movement was the first to appear, and was also the first to be discredited by the suspicion of collaboration with the Axis. Mihailovich was a regular army officer who surrounded himself largely with Serbs of pro-royalist and bitterly anti-Communist beliefs. His strategy was not based on immediate and all-out military resistance to the invader but rather on a cautious policy of slow, delaying military operations. By the end of 1943 he became convinced that a large-scale offensive by the resistance would only result in immediate reprisals against Serbia; his *Cetniks* therefore withdrew into the mountains and carefully prepared for a coup at the time of the enemy's final withdrawal from the country. Tito followed opposite tactics. Well trained in revolutionary techniques, he realized that a resistance force can be maintained and developed only by action, by personal and dynamic leadership, even if the civilian population would thus be exposed to the hardship of brutal reprisals.

Because of this basic divergency in strategy, Tito's Partisans accom-

plished more than the *Cetniks* of Mihailovich who, driven by their increasing hatred of the Communists, closely collaborated with the Germans in 1944. The decisive factor which paved the way for the triumph of leftist resistance forces was the intensive Allied aid given Tito. Western assistance by sea and air swung the battle of supplies in Tito's favor, and although the Partisans found it convenient to forget the significance of this aid, it gave them the military and political opportunities to establish their Communist dictatorship. This formidable background of conflict and disagreement did not facilitate the reconstruction difficulties of the country. Several vital problems faced the newly established regime of Tito. One of the more immediate issues was the restoration of a civil administration which could maintain order, reorganize a virtually nonexistent transportation system, and provide food and clothing for a destitute people. Coincident with the rebuilding of a complex economic machinery, a legally constituted authority had to be called into life in 1944 and 1945, in order to safeguard the position of the new Partisan leaders who had already wrested *de facto*, military control over the nation.

#### THE CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF YUGOSLAVIA

Following World War I, the country's political life was governed by the so-called Vidovdan constitution of 1921. Under a veneer of seemingly progressive ideas, this constitutional document was intransigent to the point of authoritarianism. In theory, it provided for a parliamentary form of government based on a single-chamber legislature, the *Skupština*, with one member for every forty thousand inhabitants. It also called for proportional representation and universal manhood suffrage, and it gave a broad definition of the political, social, and civil rights of citizens. At the same time it emphasized the prevalence of the executive branch of government, particularly of the cabinet and the king, who approved and proclaimed the laws, and had an absolute veto power. The constitution also clearly stated that parliamentary and civil rights could be suspended or limited if "national and state authority" demanded it, a rather ominous provision in itself. It came as no surprise to the people of Yugoslavia that even the limited freedoms assured by the *Vidovdan* document were abolished in 1929 when King Alexander imposed his personal dictatorship upon the country. In 1931 a new constitution was drafted and arbitrarily introduced. Conceived in a spirit of military dictatorship, this law established Yugoslavia as a hereditary monarchy, drastically limited ministerial responsibility,

and forbade parties based on regional, religious, or racial foundations. Civil liberties were also redefined; the freedoms of press, of association, of public meetings were permitted but only "within the limits of the law." Voting was to be open and oral, elections were to be closely supervised by government authorities. These provisions obviously contributed to the degeneration of domestic politics. National elections became utterly meaningless, ballots were cast primarily for friends and supporters of the regime, and most of the old political parties were either officially dissolved or prevented from functioning effectively. In 1940 even the semblance of parliamentary government disappeared with the sudden dissolution of the *Skupshтина* by Regent Prince Paul. By the time Danubian Europe was engulfed in World War II, a disturbing constitutional vacuum existed in Yugoslavia.<sup>4</sup>

The governmental gap was adequately filled by a new constitution, which was generally agreed upon at the provincial Jajce Assembly of 1943, and fully adopted by the first postwar constituent assembly in January 1946. This constitution is of particular interest to students of Danubian Europe, as it replaces the earlier unitary state system by a new federal structure. Accordingly, the Yugoslav Republic, now more appropriately renamed the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, is divided into six full-fledged federal republics. These are Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Bosnia, each with its own government and a certain amount of local jurisdiction. The new federal structure brought almost complete autonomy to many parts of the Yugoslav state. Within the framework of the people's republics there are several small autonomous regions, such as Vojvodina, and certain provinces on an even smaller scale, such as the historically famous Kossovo district. Legislative authority is vested in a People's Assembly composed of two houses, the Federal Council and the Council of Nationalities, both of them having equal authority. The Federal Council is elected by all citizens on the basis of population; for every fifty thousand inhabitants one deputy is elected. The Council of Nationalities is chosen on a territorial basis, each republic being allotted thirty, the smaller autonomous provinces twenty, and the smallest geographic units, the autonomous regions, fifteen representatives in the Council. Regular sessions of the People's Assembly are convened twice a year, in April and in October. Its rather undefined sphere of powers centers around the discussion and voting of bills introduced by the government.

The Presidium of the Parliament is a completely new institution in

the country's constitutional life. The People's Assembly chooses the Presidium, which is the formal executive organ and performs some of the most important state functions. Its activities parallel those exercised by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., convening, dissolving, and ordering elections for the People's Assembly, proclaiming and interpreting all federal laws, ratifying international treaties, appointing and recalling members of the foreign service, declaring general mobilization and a state of war.<sup>5</sup> The Presidium of the People's Assembly consists of a president, six vice presidents, a secretary, and thirty members. At present the top leaders of Yugoslavia's Communist party, the ministers of the central government, and the premiers of the six individual republics all belong to the Presidium. Its comprehensive functions emphatically illustrate the fact that the new constitution provides for no separation between executive and legislative powers. As one author observes, "this in itself does not represent a departure from the past, since Yugoslavia was previously governed on the basis of a parliamentary system, whose very foundation rests on the fusion of the legislative and executive powers."<sup>6</sup> As long as government officials and cabinet ministers form the membership of the Presidium they will be responsible *for* themselves as administrators, and *to* themselves as executives. This interlocking constitutional machinery obviously paves the way toward a complete and tight centralization.

Other relevant features of the constitution include provisions concerning civil liberties and governmental activities of the state. While personal liberty, religious freedom, freedom of press, speech, and assembly are guaranteed *in theory*, resembling the pattern set by the Vidovdan constitution a quarter of a century earlier, several practical limitations are clearly outlined by the constitution. Profascist writing is prohibited, papers may not incite national hatreds and may not recommend the overthrow of the government by force; they may not write against friendly states and may not issue any publications financed from abroad. Following the postwar pattern of Danubian politics, the constitution devotes a separate chapter to "Social-Economic Organization." All economic activities of the state point toward intensive socialization and long-range national planning. The concept of property is carefully redefined; private property is radically limited and subject to expropriation at any time. The means of production now belong either to the state or to the cooperatives, whose number and national significance have increased steadily since 1945. The progress of socialization is speeded up considerably by declaring national

property such major resources as minerals, waters, sources of natural power, and all means of communication and transportation. A "general economic plan" is outlined in broad features; the state will direct the economic life and development of the country in accordance with this national plan aimed at enlarging the area of centralized guidance and collective economic control. In so doing, the government will rely primarily on the assistance of syndicalist organizations and similar cooperative groups of the working people. The national program is entrusted to a commissioner of economic planning who is given a ministerial portfolio in the cabinet. The commissioner and the ministers of industry and of finance are ultimately responsible for the state-controlled reconstruction of Yugoslavia's economy. This emphasis on economic functions and planning activities was fully implemented by the regime when in November 1946 Marshal Tito personally announced a new national five-year plan closely patterned after the government's postwar economic blueprints. The objective of this five-year plan was "to help transform Yugoslavia from an agricultural into an industrial country."

Collectivist planning is usually incompatible with the existence of capitalistic, commercial organizations or landed interests. The constitution expressly provides that "cartels, syndicates, trusts and similar organizations created for the purpose of dictating prices, monopolizing the market and damaging the interests of the national economy, are forbidden." Similar fate awaits private landholdings, whose maximum size is rigidly established by law, subject to the sweeping pronouncement: "The land belongs to those who cultivate it." The state has taken over for redistribution all lands which were owned by banks, joint-stock companies, churches and monasteries, and estates which belonged to German citizens and other collaborationists. Beyond these initial restrictive measures the status of the land has not been fully determined. In the absence of legal settlement the present People's Front is free to dispose of the land and to exploit its natural resources.

People's committees elected by the citizens of towns and villages play an important role in local government and administration. Their task is to insure the maintenance of public order, the execution of the laws, and the protection of the rights of citizens. Through these local administrative organs both higher state authorities and political parties can exert a direct influence on the members of individual communities. Members of the people's committees are also local agents of the Communist party. The people's committees and workers' organizations

are of decisive value in the centralization of Yugoslavia's governmental system. The constitution's appeal to the masses is clearly expressed in Article 109, which provides that "it is the duty of the people's committees, in the execution of their general and local duties, to rely on the initiative and wide participation of the masses of the people and workers' organizations."\* The constitution also provides for people's courts headed by a supreme court as the highest organ of justice, with judges and jurors elected by the People's Assembly. Most of the judicial power resides, however, in public prosecutors, who supervise all ministries and administrative agencies of the state in the application of the law. Judicial and executive power is closely interwoven with the functions of the prosecutors, who are active on every level of national and local administration. The role of public prosecutors is paralleled by that of the military prosecutors, appointed by the commander in chief of the army and active within the broad framework of the state's military organization.

It is difficult to appraise the full impact of these constitutional provisions at a time when few of them have been put into full operation. On the whole, the 1946 Yugoslav constitution is a fairly true copy of the Soviet constitution of 1936, which establishes a similar political system, assumes the same economic doctrines, and insists on ideological objectives which are not much at variance. Not unlike other Danubian constitutions, there is particular emphasis here on social and economic activities, on national planning, and on wide popular participation in governmental functions. The state has significant new powers of administrative control. Article 26 of the Yugoslav constitution provides a suitable illustration. "Matrimony and the family are under the protection of the state. The state regulates by law the legal relations of marriage and the family." Its authorities are now free to restrict individual liberties in several rather vaguely defined eventualities or national emergencies. The most disturbing paradox of the new constitution is its stress on a loose federal structure composed of six republics, and simultaneously its recurrent provisions concerning the manifold means of strict centralization in the Presidium, people's committees, and the unprecedented institution of public prosecutors.

\* Italics mine.



THE PEOPLE'S FRONT, COMMUNIST PARTY  
AGENCIES AND TACTICS

The preceding survey of Yugoslavia's constitutional development clearly points to an abundant tradition in the practice of determined authoritarianism. Describing the new constitution, Marshal Tito observed in 1946 that "the relationship between people and authority has changed in new Yugoslavia so that *there is no longer a conflict between them, but a political and organizational unity.*"\* This seemingly undisturbed national unity presents an interesting contrast to the wartime Partisan movements in which amorphous groups were temporarily welded together by the revolutionary tactics of the Communists. Although initially dependent on the political and moral support of Western democracies, Tito's followers soon devoted their full energies to a thorough reorganization of the country, until today complete Communist control is established through an effective party system, the People's Front.

This organization, officially described as a coalition of several major political parties, consists mostly of a thin texture of names and carefully chosen leaders, all of them directly controlled by the Communist party. This cleverly simulated National Front includes the remnants of several historically significant prewar parties, now claiming to represent various democratic or socialist groups. The regime apparently intends to bring certain new classes of people into political life, using the People's Front as a convenient cloak. Before the war a large part of the nation, nearly all of the workers, most of the peasants, and the leftist intelligentsia, were essentially excluded from political life. They belonged to no party because no political group was interested in their ideas and aspirations. It is questionable whether the present monolithic organization of the party system allows them a larger area of expressing their political beliefs. In addition to a Communist nucleus, the People's Front today includes small representations of the Republican party, the Agrarians, and the Croatian Republican Peasant party which, in a different prewar setting, used to be a potent factor in national politics under the personal leadership of Dr. Machek. Some of the present-day parties, like the carefully selected pro-Tito factions of the Croatian Republicans, seem to be artificially fostered by the government in order to give the impression of a vigorous multiparty political system. Opposition is impossible in a government of this type. It is not surprising to realize that the principal leaders of Tito's opposition are either

\* Italics mine.

dead or in exile. In spite of the frequently repeated official label, according to which the People's Front is "a coalition of all progressive and uncompromised parties," the center of political power lies largely outside this group, which lacks corporate individuality, has neither life nor protagonists of its own, and can exert no influence in determining governmental policies. The Yugoslav People's Front is an interesting variation of the well-known Communist strategy which weakens political parties of the moderate Left and Center by the simple device of including them in the government. These groups then share all the burdens and responsibilities of national administration, without the advantages of the power and authority usually associated with positions of leadership. This pattern of "Divide and Rule" has clearly emerged in Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria, and is now in the process of full application in Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

Yugoslavia's present regime is not a personal dictatorship but a government by oligarchy whose authority radiates from three important agencies. These are the federal cabinet, the army, and the secret police which, in fact, express the ever-present power of the Communist party. The party exerts a great deal of its aggressiveness through the cabinet of ministers whose jurisdiction extends over federal, state, and local matters of government. The key positions are safely held by fellow Communists who fill at least nine of the major portfolios in an impressive cabinet of twenty-eight ministers. The power nucleus is formed around a Communist prime minister, minister of war, and minister of the interior. The latter is in charge of the entire police system, and is therefore particularly formidable in the political hierarchy. This position is held by Colonel General Alexander Rankovich, head of the dreaded Secret Police, recently camouflaged by the name of State Security Administration, or UDB. The other leading spokesmen of the present cabinet are Edvard Kardelj, foreign minister of the regime and its representative in the councils of peacemaking, and ubiquitous General Milovan Djilas, in charge of all party affairs and active as Tito's personal deputy. Party and government are safely linked in present-day Yugoslavia, where the most powerful figures of the federal cabinet are also members of the semisecret Communist Committee of Seven, which actually rules the country and is closely patterned after the Russian Politburo. Both cabinet and Committee of Seven are directly responsible to Marshal Tito in his dual capacity as head of government and actual leader of the Communist party. The most paradoxical feature of this governmental system is that top members of the party have

not attempted to legalize their *de facto* economic and political control. Tito's official position is the only major exception; he is not only premier of Yugoslavia but minister of national defense, commander in chief of the Yugoslav army, marshal of Yugoslavia, representative to the People's Assembly, member of the Presidium, as well as head of the Popular Front, and secretary general of the Communist party. His Communist comrades are carefully distributed in all of these organizations. In a country so completely dominated by a single party, a Communist-controlled cabinet can hardly expect any opposition from a Communist-dominated Presidium elected by a Communist-dominated People's Assembly consisting of representatives of a Communist-dominated Popular Front. Thus there is little doubt that the cabinet's real power is derived not so much from the constitution as from the over-all strength of the Communist party. Fundamentally it is the cabinet, headed by Tito, which controls Yugoslavia, exercising close supervision over all other branches of the government.<sup>7</sup>

The second major instrument of administrative power is the new postwar army. In addition to enforcing order and providing for the streamlined functioning of local government, which is now devoid of all major forms of opposition, the army is entrusted with the work of political instruction and propaganda. It takes up the education of the young citizen where his inadequate schooling was left off. The young man follows the guidance of Red army instructors and is thoroughly briefed in the tactics of the glorious Partisan days. The entire postwar army is based on the nucleus of the Partisans who survived the bitter campaigns of 1941-1945. As the majority of officers of the old army were hostile to Tito's movement from the beginning, the key personnel of the present army is new and thoroughly loyal to the regime. Its officers are to an increasing extent political nominees whose fanaticism is an important asset to the present administration.

The most repressive apparatus of the state is the police, which has been radically reorganized and is firmly in Communist hands. The new uniformed police is called the militia and works side by side with the secret police organization, the UDB. This group is better known by its former initials of OZNA, which, in a literal translation, stood for Department for the Protection of the People. This nation-wide political police system is staffed with reliable Communists, many of whom are Partisan veterans or served in various local underground movements or in intelligence work during the years of enemy occupation. UDB is much feared throughout the country and is certainly responsible for

restricting the citizens' personal liberties and civic rights to an all-time low. On the whole, its methods do not appear to be milder or more acceptable than those of its predecessors, including even the German Gestapo, which brought unmitigated terror to Yugoslavia.<sup>8</sup>

The political functions of the state and its major administrative agencies are closely determined by the Communist party, which has emerged as the real center of power. The party itself is strong in Belgrade, but displays a strange unevenness and many conspicuous weaknesses in the country. Its nucleus is a membership of about 150,000 loyal followers who are directly controlled by the central Committee of Seven in which Tito is the personal and dominant force. The present rulers of the Communist party have retained one characteristic feature from their bitter prewar days, the ingrained habit of conspiracy. The composition, organization, and major activities of Yugoslavia's Communists are shrouded in utmost secrecy. Unlike their close comrades in Bulgaria or Rumania, members of this party steadfastly decline to reveal the identity of their top office-holders beyond the two or three leaders who inevitably receive prominent headline publicity in the national and international press. Though it is provided by law that political parties must register with the authorities and announce their program, governing body, rules of membership, and size, the Communist party has completely ignored this obligation. Its political practices of today no more express the popular will than they did during the first twenty years of clandestine party agitation. The only important qualitative difference is that the Communist party is no longer a persecuted minority, but the holder of absolute political power in the country.

The principal objectives and guiding motivations of the regime were expressed in a significant speech by Tito, delivered at the second Congress of the People's Front in September, 1947: "The new social system in our country requires a new form of political life. Numerous and heterogeneous, by their conceptions, political parties would in our country constitute the greatest obstacle to the rapid and lasting progress of our fatherland. *Not only the political, but the economic structure of our country precludes the possibility of the existence of numerous political parties advocating old programs and old conceptions. A unified economic program requires also a unified political leadership.*"\*

What, specifically, is the role of the Communist party in this new

\* Italics mine.

postwar State? Tito's speech seems to point toward the following fields of activity:

- 1) The party is the leader of all "progressive political forces" within the new state-structure of the people's republic;
- 2) The party assumes the leadership in all social development projects; and
- 3) It carries out the task of reconstructing the economic and cultural life of the country. These objectives are apparently implemented through the People's Front in which the Communist party is paradoxically both "a component part" and "the leading element."<sup>9</sup>

There is no distinct and tangible delimitation between the People's Front, a rather obvious synthetic product in itself, and the Communist party, a firm nucleus almost completely camouflaged by the cumbersome administrative machinery of the new postwar state. The absence of a jurisdictional boundary, or at least of a necessary gap between the two bodies, adds to the obscurity and confusion surrounding the highest levels of leadership. The party apparently exerts its role through the medium of the Front, which assists it in maintaining a safe parliamentary and interparty majority.

The relationship of the People's Front to the Communist party thus emerges as one of the more intricate aspects in the life of this Danubian state. Tito's speech devotes an entire section to an analysis of these two governmental organs: "Has the Communist party of Yugoslavia some other program outside the program of the People's Front? No; the Communist party has no other program. The program of the People's Front is its program too. What, then, is the difference between the Communist party on the one hand, and the . . . People's Front on the other? The Communist party of Yugoslavia was allotted the role of leading all the progressive democratic forces, both in the war of liberation and now in the peaceful reconstruction of the country."<sup>10</sup> Two cardinal points stand out in this discussion. The small and tightly organized Communist party controls the Front without competition or interference from other "component elements." Furthermore, the role of absolute and unopposed leadership has been conferred upon the party "by the broad masses of the people." The Communists first appeared on the scene during the country's war of liberation and fought against the Fascist invader. Today, it seems, they are fighting their

own brand of struggle—a war of liberation aimed at all “nonprogressive forces,” be they internal or external.

### OPPOSITION TO THE REGIME

Against the tremendous array of constitutional and political power devices, opposition to Tito's government has become gradually more and more difficult. National resistance usually requires certain minimum conditions which the present regime has been careful to withhold: the right to organize parties, hold meetings, make speeches, travel freely, and speak openly. An effective opposition presupposes constructive political programs commanding at least partial allegiance throughout the country. In Yugoslavia opposition groups seem to be lacking today in all major prerequisites of success. The resistance is massive but disorganized and generally mute. It has neither national leaders nor a concrete program as an alternative to Tito's; yet the only answer to a nation-wide one-party dictatorship is a nation-wide unity of all other parties. On the whole, the people of Yugoslavia are still steeped in particularist, regional thinking and express themselves in terms of exclusively Serbian or Croatian political attitudes. The government had, therefore, no trouble in eliminating most of the centers of “reaction,” particularly remnants of the prewar liberal and democratic parties backed by an ever-shrinking middle class. The anti-opposition theory of the regime was forcefully expressed by Tito himself, who declared in a speech given at Tuzla in October 1946 that “those who will persist in hindering the creation of a better future, the reconstruction of our country, the creation of something better and new, will have to disappear from the face of this earth. *We will have no pity toward them and we will behave toward them as against our worst enemies. We cannot stop halfway. Our road is already marked.*” \* Subsequent events clearly proved that this governmental theory was put into immediate and enthusiastic practice.

In the early days after liberation, opposition to the new regime was disorganized, although many Serbs were apprehensive of a widespread terror and expressed themselves strongly against a Communist government. These initial fears were somewhat calmed by successive announcements of a new federal constitution and of a broad coalition government, formed in mid-1945. The first postwar cabinet included several important holdovers from the Royal Yugoslav Government in Exile, which had its wartime headquarters in London. Two outstand-

\* Italics mine.

ing political leaders, the Serbian Milan Grol and the Croatian Ivan Subasich, were originally members of this promising group of top-level officials. Grol, a forceful leader of the Serbian Democratic party, was appointed first vice president while Subasich became minister of foreign affairs at the most crucial "restoration period" of the postwar republic. When they engaged in a criticism of the country's new federal structure and its strange electoral reforms, they were forced out of office and relegated to the thankless task of organizing an open opposition to Tito's ruthless regime. Subasich was promptly replaced by Edvard Kardelj, an extreme Communist, who has since served as the government's leading spokesman at the Paris and London Peace Conferences, where such vital Yugoslav issues as Trieste came up for final international disposition.

Of the first two major victims of nation-wide political streamlining, Grol assumed the stronger opposition stand. His frank and determined criticism of the regime greatly increased his standing and reputation throughout the country; it was also widely known that he had returned to Yugoslavia on the suggestion of British and American officials. His national prestige may be judged by the fact that for several months he was allowed to publish a party newspaper which was widely circulated, despite the efforts of the secret police to intimidate its clientele. Gradually, however, the anti-opposition policy tightened, and men of Grol's stature were forced into complete silence. The government centered most of its attention around three major sources of discontent and resistance, two in the provinces and one in the capital city of Belgrade. Croatia and Bosnia are the areas where drastic measures had to be taken to stifle the resistance of religious groups and fragments of prewar political parties. In Croatia the Catholic Church is in undisguised hostility to the regime and its efforts, combined with those of the still-popular Peasant party, have generated serious friction. Because of several centuries of firm Catholic orientation and Western leadership, Croatia cannot be brought under effective police control as easily as some of the adjoining, more "Serbianized" provinces. One must not forget that in this part of Yugoslavia no government has been truly popular, and grumbling is both a heritage and a satisfactory pastime. There was also a great deal of open resistance in Bosnia, where a bungling system of local administration helped to develop a virile opposition movement.

An interesting contrast is presented by Belgrade, which harbors political elements of both extremes. Here are the headquarters of the

most active and vocal members of the Communist elite, and here also is the most sizable and bitter opposition to the present dictatorship. In the view of one observer, "after the liberation a sort of war-communism prevailed; . . . thousands were denounced and had to be detained; the jails were full and the city was badly frightened."<sup>11</sup> Obviously neither the secret police nor prisons are new to Belgrade, but never were these so busy, so effective, or so wholesale in their methods as during the past year and a half. Communist leaders followed the well-known tactical device of declaring several key leaders as collaborators, whenever they ventured to take a positive attitude against extremist measures of government control.

The most notorious case of this type was the personal persecution of Dragolub Yovanovitch, whose political record included years of imprisonment under King Alexander's prewar dictatorship. He was also leader of the Serbian Peasant party and after June 1941 a Tito follower. Like Grol and Subasich, he was a member of the cabinet and even secretary of the People's Front, but when he engaged upon a brief campaign of criticism of the Communist party, he was rapidly expelled from the government, from his own political party, and from his position as professor at the University of Belgrade. Cabinet members bitterly attacked him because he objected to the speed with which Parliament was commanded to "adopt" all official legislation, and because he opposed the government's foreign policy of all-out alliance with the Soviet Union. In February 1947 Yovanovitch was beaten up and severely wounded by a group of Serbian Communists while police officers stood by without intervening. Although the Ministry of Interior started a perfunctory investigation, Belgrade's tightly controlled government press never published a word of the incident. Foreign correspondents confirmed the story and a startled American press recorded the physical assault on a prominent person in Yugoslavia's public life who, by then, had acquired the doubtful distinction of forming a one-man opposition in Tito's packed Parliament. Having recovered from his serious injuries, Yovanovitch was promptly called before a people's tribunal and sentenced to nine years of imprisonment. The court based its judgment on the charges that he attempted to form a dissident "peasant bloc" within the People's Front and that his subversive resistance was directly instigated by various Westerners, including a former British press attaché. The defendant probably had the last word in publicly stating that no major force was left in the country capable of fighting or preventing the undesirable measures of the



regime. Terror would henceforth continue without interruption, he concluded. Although the inevitable impact of Communism and a renewed spirit of Pan-Slavism have thus gripped the people, both Serbs and Croats are strongly individualistic and have their own brand of resistance to the misuse of superior authority. It is still an open question how long the recently federalized provinces of Yugoslavia will choose to submit obediently to the iron grip of the Belgrade leaders.

## CIVIL LIBERTIES

### CHURCH AND STATE

Civil liberties, never noticeably emphasized under the prewar dictatorships of Yugoslavia, have reached a new low ebb in the postwar period. Even the elaborate provisions of the present constitution concerning freedom of religion (Article 25), freedom of speech, press, and assembly (Article 27), and the inviolability of persons, are not taken seriously. By constitutional guarantee, for example, no one can be detained in prison for more than three days without the written decision of a law court. Nevertheless, as impartial observers have frequently pointed out, the jails are full and people are being imprisoned for months without any official charges or statements concerning their "crimes against the state." These imprisonments, without charges or legal trials and for reasons of general political unreliability, are common knowledge throughout the country. The regime maintains that only those with guilty consciences are afraid, but apparently anti-Communists of all shades and types are grouped in this broad classification. At any rate, denunciations by personal enemies or by agents of the government are enough to send many citizens to prison.

The issue of civil liberties was strongly projected into recent domestic politics by the increasingly bitter conflicts between Church and state. Unhappily the national government managed to mobilize fully its various agencies of repression and took a particularly strong line of anticlerical action through its courts. In the fall of 1947 the people's tribunal of Istria, a border province awarded Yugoslavia by the recent peace treaties, imposed the incredibly light sentences of three and five months of imprisonment, respectively, on two men who had brutally murdered a Catholic priest. At the same time each of several peasants who tried to prevent a Communist mob from forcing its way into a Catholic church received prison terms of eight months.

The violent campaign against the Catholic Church had actually

culminated a few months earlier, in the famous Stepinatz case, which was the most dramatic of a series of moves taken by the government against the Catholic clergy. Although Tito himself had conferred with Archbishop Aloysius Stepinatz of Croatia and other high Church dignitaries after the liberation, when it seemed that a satisfactory compromise arrangement could be reached, the conflict between Church and state flared up at an early stage of postwar politics. The first challenge to open battle was a series of governmental reform measures aimed at the secular position of the Church. An agrarian reform law confiscated a majority of its landed estates, while an even more sweeping educational law abolished all confessional schools, thus uprooting the entire educational system of Catholic Croatia. Archbishop Stepinatz replied by denouncing in several forceful and outspoken pastoral letters the "obviously pagan tendencies" of Tito's government. "The real reason for this struggle of the present regime against the Zagreb archbishop," he publicly stated, "is that . . . to remove the Archbishop would be to give Catholicism its heaviest blow, to pierce the heart of the Croatian soul, and to leave a clear road . . . to subdue the Church to the will of a regime that today, according to the admissions of its leaders, is *internationally known as the most faithful disciple of the Soviet regime in the Balkans.*"\*

Shortly after publication of these statements the archbishop was arrested and hastily brought before a people's court on charges of alleged complicity in war crimes and collaboration with the enemy. The prosecution submitted evidence to the effect that Stepinatz worked to "strengthen the interests of the Pope in the Balkans" and that he personally supported the terrorist regime of the Croatian puppet ruler, Ante Pavelitch, describing it in his sermons as occasioned by Divine Providence. Coincidentally with this notorious trial, the government intensified its anticlerical campaign throughout the country. Tito's speeches frequently referred to the religious issue in such terms as "the Catholic Church has shown to the full extent its hostile attitude toward the spirit of the new Yugoslavia." The regime apparently felt justified in prosecuting the most prominent clerical elements, now generally labeled as antinational. The press attacked the Church bitterly and at the slightest provocation. Commenting on the Stepinatz case, it stated that "what happened in the late summer of 1941 and thereafter in Yugoslavia was the final triumph of the 'Catholic Radicalism' . . . which Archbishop Stepinatz had praised. The real nature of 'Catholic

\* Italics mine.

Radicalism' became manifest in outbursts of fanatical hatred toward the Orthodox religion, the Serb people, and the Yugoslav state."<sup>12</sup>

In view of the unbridled extremism of the government's attitude, it is no surprise that the archbishop's trial was grossly unfair and that most of the defense evidence was not introduced at all. Supporters of the Church leader claimed that he never took an oath of allegiance to the Pavelitch government, and also pointed to the significant warning issued by the archbishop to his clergy, "to avoid every word that could be interpreted as having a purely political character." As expected, the trial resulted in his condemnation to sixteen years' hard labor. Simultaneously, stern judicial measures were taken against other high dignitaries of the Catholic Church—the Archbishop of Sarajevo in Bosnia and the bishops of Ljubljana and Maribor in Slovenia. Slovenia was singled out by the government as a focus of "Fascist-clerical activities," allegedly centered around the leader of the Slovene Clerical party, Dr. Miha Krek. His group was certainly an important force prior to World War II and commanded a large number of followers in this wealthy and Westernized province. In the postwar period, however, Slovenian opposition slowly disintegrated under the relentless pressure of a totalitarian government. The main difficulty was that the Slovenes, while experts at *passive* resistance after their long and weary subjections to the Germans, Austrians, and Italians, had no political gift for vigorous campaigning against any particular regime.

Today Croatia alone looms as the center of a stubborn Roman Catholic resistance movement in which several well-defined organizational groups demand religious freedom, and eventually the creation of an independent state. There are well-armed guerrilla bands, the so-called *Krizhari* or Crusaders, in the mountains of Croatia, and although their total impact on the national administration and on the present status of civil liberties is small, at least they serve as examples of *active* resistance in certain parts of the country. Tito's group is seemingly undisturbed by the religious-political opposition of the Croats. Foreign Minister Kardelj expressed a threat against them in a recent official speech describing the elements of Croatian resistance as "an antinational clique trying to intrigue its way back to power." Obviously the Belgrade government comforts itself with the conviction that the Croats have always been dissatisfied and that effective new police control, coupled with the economic suffering of a difficult postwar era, will eventually bring the people of this crucial province to their senses.

On the whole, the deep-seated conflict of Church and state presents

a serious and unsettled problem for postwar Yugoslavia. It certainly determines the extent of all other civil liberties and adversely affects the right to exercise such minimal personal freedoms as were officially guaranteed by the constitution of 1946. Although Tito's government is firmly entrenched in most sectors of the country, it is questionable whether it can afford to challenge the Catholic Church with a ruthless persecution campaign directed against the clergy. The trial and sentence of Archbishop Stepinatz aroused a great deal of resentment abroad. International public opinion was incensed at the obvious unfairness and injustice manifested in this case. The serious setback in prestige resulting from this brutal violation of human rights influenced, in turn, the economic and political alliances of Yugoslavia, reducing her Western friendships and connections to their nadir. Today her closest allies are certain Communist governments which have displayed a startlingly similar approach toward civil liberties, religious freedoms, and the secular position of the Roman Catholic Church.

#### PRESS AND PROPAGANDA

The present status of the press clearly reflects the insignificance of political opposition and the general impotence of all non-Communist forces. The press faithfully records every utterance of the leaders and is an integral part of the rigidly controlled state propaganda machine. Despite the lip service paid to the freedom of the press in Tito's speeches and the new constitution, there are no opposition newspapers in Yugoslavia today. Both the quality and the quantity of newspaper writing have gone down sharply in the past two years. Only two daily papers are published in Belgrade—*Borba*, house organ of the Communist party, and *Politika*, a coalition publication on the same level of political subservience. The term *Borba* stands for struggle in Serbian, and seems to be an appropriate name for this belligerent paper, which is a storehouse of information on Communist methods and objectives. All other newspapers reflect the ideological line laid down by *Borba*, whose editorials and leading articles are written according to the directives issued daily by the party's Committee of Seven. These memoranda emphasize the well-known principles that newspapers are supposed to serve the state and that journalism itself, far from being an objective profession, should develop into one arm of the class struggle. *Borba's* editors, therefore, reach the inevitable conclusion that "*any opposition against the People's Front which would attempt to break unity, cannot appear in our newspapers.*"\*

\* Italics mine.

In accordance with this rule, the domestic and foreign policies of the regime evoke nothing but enthusiasm. *Politika*, for example, proudly points out that no labor strike has occurred in Yugoslavia since her liberation. All employers and employees are now equal participants in a united syndicates organization which has helped to solve all labor problems! Surveying the scene of international politics, Yugoslav newspapers frequently state that Belgrade has today become the most important Western Slav capital, a true equivalent of Moscow, ready to assume the needed leadership instead of relinquishing it to Poland, "still too divided," or to Czechoslovakia, "still too bourgeois." One of *Politika's* editorials offers a variation of this theme in its remark that next to the U.S.S.R. Yugoslavia contributed most in World War II, the greatest proportional effort, to final victory.

Compared to the overwhelming strength of the government-dominated press the voice of a disorganized opposition seldom reaches print, and is in no position to fight an ubiquitous official propaganda machinery. When the Agrarian party's publication, *Selo*, began to express mild and hesitant criticism of Tito's government, it was suspended for several weeks and then had its newsprint quota drastically cut. *Selo* is now a weekly paper, effectively transformed into a section of the nation-wide Communist press. Grol's popular *Demokratija* appeared for a few days and was feverishly circulated in Belgrade; then the typesetters' union, under strict governmental control, refused to set further issues. It was finally suppressed on the eve of a national election and has not appeared since. Simultaneously, several Croat opposition papers were banned, their premises wrecked, and their editors arrested. Some local papers have survived in the less exposed provinces of Slovenia and Macedonia, but most of them are of a strictly technical character and have been compelled to fall in line with *Borba* and *Tanjug*, the official Yugoslav news agency. In a country seriously handicapped by the lack of trained personnel, even the official press bureau is only a mere skeleton staffed by a few "newspaper experts" of the administration. Despite this, *Tanjug* has a valuable monopoly on all domestic news and on all information leaving the country through official channels.

Through the control of all press publications the propaganda machinery of the state had no difficulty in developing elaborate techniques of organizing political demonstrations. These demonstrations serve to commemorate or celebrate important events; thus the degree of their elaborateness usually depends on the importance of the occasion. The

interesting process of staging them is well described in the periodical, *The World Today*: "On the eve of the day fixed for the demonstration, instructions are given to the workers and civil servants, the trade unions, the ward committees, and the anti-Fascist organizations to get ready for action. They receive orders to report to fixed assembly points in the city at a stated time. Mimeographed lists of the slogans to be used are produced, and reliable persons appointed to direct the marching columns . . . . The route and timing of the mass procession is carefully planned, and the school-children get busy painting the banners inscribed with the appropriate words, and decking the giant pictures of Stalin and Tito with flowers and wreaths of greenery."<sup>13</sup> These elaborate techniques were put to frequent use and test in recent rounds of negotiations.\* Each time a Rumanian, Bulgarian, or Hungarian delegation arrived in Belgrade the intensity of these "popular demonstrations" denoted the extent of real or forced friendliness among the negotiating parties. In that respect, the propaganda machine of Yugoslavia seems to be the most efficiently organized and most tightly disciplined of all Danubian governments. Press and propaganda are in a state of perpetual mobilization, their motivations equally aggressive toward internal opponents and external enemies.

### ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION

The economic problems of the Danubian region are not new nor are they susceptible of easy final solution. Five countries, narrowly crowded into a small area, are closely dependent on each other and live in economic conditions which are obviously unsatisfactory. More specifically one of their principal problems—the curse of Eastern Europe between the wars—was the exceedingly large proportion of the rural element in their population. In Yugoslavia about 75 per cent of the people were peasants, a percentage surpassed by neighboring Rumania (78 per cent) and Bulgaria (80 per cent). The marked predominance of a farming population has several major drawbacks, of which the most serious is undeniably that of unemployment. The number of people who can be employed in agriculture is small, while more advanced industrialized regions would be able to support a much heavier concentration of the population. Yugoslavia has been steadily plagued by hidden agricultural unemployment, with large numbers of people performing tasks that a small fraction of them could easily do if standards of efficiency in

\* For full details on these diplomatic negotiations, cf. Chapter VIII, "Alliances and Federation Projects in Danubian Europe."

agricultural production were raised or opportunities of employment were increased elsewhere. Although the country's war losses were heavy, latest estimates placing them at about one and a half million casualties, overpopulation is still a primary problem and unemployment its inevitable accompaniment.

These twin difficulties were not brought closer to solution by the limited and unsatisfactory land reforms initiated by various Yugoslav governments before World War II. These reforms aimed mostly at the liquidation of the possessions of Croatia's nobility, of the landed properties of Hungarians in the *Bácska* and *Bánát* provinces, and of the estates of the Moslem aristocracy in Bosnia. Although regional conditions in the landholding system were thus improved, the Yugoslav state never favored the development of a class of small peasant proprietors. A further drawback was the fact that a surprisingly large part of the landowning class was foreign, while another sizable group consisted of native elements whose loyalties bound them to foreign powers and who had steadily supported the Turkish and then the Austro-Hungarian regimes. Neither sector of the population had much sympathy for the relatively new idea of an independent and self-centered Yugoslavia. Unlike Rumania or Hungary, there was no massive and coherent body of landed aristocracy either in Serbia or in Croatia. The large landowners were much more apt to live abroad and to favor Western European ideas than to show genuine interest in characteristically Danubian problems and the necessary reform measures. Tito's government has not done much in the way of land reform. Landholdings were limited to twenty hectares, but about 70 per cent of the peasants had already less than two or three hectares. The regime concentrated mostly on punitive land measures, such as the forced sale of estates at fixed prices, the expulsion of the remaining thousands of German settlers, and the subdivision of their estates among retired soldiers and certain peasant groups from the most backward areas of Montenegro and Bosnia. Further drastic shifts in the country's land tenure system were made almost impossible by the terrible economic devastation which occurred during the long war years. The destruction of homes, farm buildings, tools, and livestock as well as the general loss of human life cannot be fully measured. The losses of buildings and livestock, and the general disorganization of all phases of economic life, are the most serious handicaps to national reconstruction. These are special hardships for a people already on the margin of subsistence.<sup>14</sup>

Beyond the scope of superficial land reforms, there have been several

worth-while suggestions for solving the agricultural dilemma of Yugoslavia. Increasing industrialization, a thorough transformation of the nation into an industrial country, has been advocated as the major panacea. The new industries could then be used to absorb thousands of unemployed or unproductive agrarian workers, former tenant farmers, and all those who at present are included in the large class of the marginally employed. Another recent project emphasized a need for the forced emigration of thousands of people who form an unproductive agricultural surplus, and live off the land without contributing anything to its improvement.<sup>15</sup> Undoubtedly both of these measures would considerably increase the living space of Yugoslavia's population, the productivity of its agriculture and industry, and the rate of useful export material and of essential imports. A new class of industrial workers would appear as consumers with a definite purchasing power, instead of the marginal agricultural laborers who are an almost total loss to the country's economy.

For obvious political reasons large-scale emigration is frowned upon and energetically discouraged by the present Communist governments of Danubian Europe. An aggressive and military-minded state like Tito's Yugoslavia would rather tolerate a return to the unsatisfactory economic conditions of the prewar period than allow thousands of its own citizens, potentially important elements in the country's war effort, to leave for abroad. Therefore the steps toward economic reconstruction were taken in the field of further industrialization. The industrial development of the country was facilitated to a certain extent by the development of new agricultural cooperatives and the centralization of their control in the hands of state authorities. A law on cooperatives was passed in the federal Parliament in the summer of 1946. It provides for collective planning and farming in agricultural areas, establishes state machine-tractor stations and other such centers for heavy farming equipment, and designates the cooperatives as the main channels for the distribution of town-made goods to the villages. These drastic measures foreshadowed a complete collectivization of the land. The use of state-owned tractors is only one of several devices which help to make people more dependent on local officials and the government. Such dependence will gradually coerce them into full-fledged collective farming on the Soviet pattern. In spite of the justifiable fears of the rural population, the cooperatives contribute to the promotion of economic-industrial planning and serve as liaison agencies between the few urban centers and the widespread agricultural areas. While



helpful to economic recovery, the cooperatives are also dangerous political instruments in the hands of the present national administration. The law of 1946 was bitterly attacked by a few members of the small parliamentary opposition as a device for furthering centralized control in Belgrade and for subordinating the entire economy of Yugoslavia to the cooperatives which, in turn, are carefully supervised by agents of the government.

The same economic and political arguments can be applied to the most important reform move of the postwar regime, the new five-year plan. The comprehensive Yugoslav Nationalization Law was passed by the federal Parliament in December 1946 and clearly expressed the determination of the regime to force intensive industrialization. It was essentially a long-term industrial development plan on a national scale, its general objectives involving the creation of new heavy industries throughout the country, the large-scale expansion of electric power, and the construction of new railroad lines and highways. All of these impressive goals are to be achieved in the shortest possible time. The key provision of the law is a complete nationalization of all industries which are "clothed with public interest." Twenty-five major forms of economic activity are specifically listed, with priorities given the coal-mining, steel, oil-refining, machine- and transportation-equipment industries. The sweeping process of nationalization also includes banks, insurance companies, commercial wholesale and retail firms, and all means of air, sea, and land communications. Theoretically private ownership is still possible in the few branches of commerce and industry not listed in the law, but the continued existence of these private enterprises depends on the permission of the Belgrade government.<sup>16</sup> Federal authorities, incidentally, made it clear from the start that they had reserved for themselves the exclusive right of controlling all important branches of industrial production. Consequently, within a few months after the law was put into full operation, the federal Presidium nationalized 353 major industrial enterprises and the provincial government of Serbia took over about a 1000 firms which were of immediate significance to the People's Republic of Serbia. In banking alone, revolutionary changes occurred when 26 new federal banks were opened for business. Of the country's 715 private banks, 181 were immediately liquidated, while the others were given notice of short-term extensions.

To implement the detailed provisions of the law and to enforce its drastic reforms, a federal Planning Commission was set up. This agency is serving as a liaison, a coordinating and executive organ of

the government. One of its principal functions is to pay compensation to owners whose property has been expropriated through nationalization. Although the compensation has to be offered in the form of cash payments, preferably in one lump sum, the Yugoslav government carried out its impressive nationalization campaign without giving any restitution to the owners of mines or factories. The Belgrade authorities expropriated overnight and without compensation the French-owned *Bor* copper mines, Europe's largest producers of this strategic mineral, and the well-known *Trepca* lead and zinc mines of Serbia, originally operated by a British mining company. The Planning Commission worked out the formula that all of these mines were actually German-owned, and if regarded as major Nazi assets, could be claimed outright by the government. This practice became so extensive that it soon made little difference to property holders whether their individual enterprises were simply nationalized or expropriated on grounds of the owners' collaboration with the Germans.<sup>17</sup>

The five-year plan devotes an entire section to cultural reconstruction. By way of a general comparison it is interesting to note that the entire cultural expenditure of the average annual budget of prewar years amounted only to 0.97 billion dinars; the new project provides for 5.9 billion over a five-year period. The objectives are detailed and comprehensive, involving a fight against illiteracy, the establishment of a large number of grade and high schools and new state universities in Bosnia and Macedonia. Large sums are provided for the creation of a Yugoslav motion-picture industry to be located in a suburb of Belgrade. New scientific and research institutions will be founded and generously subsidized by the state. The importance of cultural reconstruction and development is forcefully stressed throughout the new national project.<sup>18</sup>

The Yugoslav five-year plan generally follows the postwar pattern of Eastern Europe, with emphasis on a far-reaching economic and social revolution. Long-term blueprints are established for industrial development, business and manufacturing are nationalized, and the big estates subdivided; undeniably significant social changes occur, giving the necessary impetus and lending the power to rebuild war-torn countries. Some of these peasant states have actually started on the road leading toward fundamental domestic changes. It must be recognized that for the period of about a year and a half the postwar regimes of Danubian Europe have actually produced an environment in which long-term economic progress seemed feasible. Planning in

Yugoslavia was a great advance over the submarginal and impossible conditions of the prewar era. The most serious handicapping factor of the present *planned social revolution* is the absence of energetic popular participation. Planning begins with hastily drafted and adopted legislation and is carried forward by the unilateral, arbitrary measures of the central government. Such revolutions, dictated and closely guided from the top, seldom achieve either social stability or economic prosperity. Actions of the present rulers of Yugoslavia are certainly not conducive to the establishment of a democratic system resting on satisfactory economic and liberal political foundations.

### THE POSITION OF LABOR

In the political atmosphere of prewar Yugoslavia labor could boast of few rights and only limited opportunities for organizing its ranks. The few tentative unions which dared to brave military dictatorships had lost almost all their power by 1929. A Ministry of Social Politics was created to enforce all labor legislation. Constant use was made of a law of 1922 which rigidly defined the relations of employers and employees to each other and to the state. Government authorities were designated to act as arbitrators in all labor disputes, and all decisions of the state were considered final. In 1940 labor unions ceased to exist even nominally and their members were driven underground by laws dissolving all forms and groups of organized labor.

The postwar government has so strongly fostered labor unions that by the end of 1945 there were about 800,000 new trade union members representing a broad cross section of industrial and agricultural production. Twenty-six major unions operate at present in the fields of heavy and light industry; the most important ones are the coal miners', the metal workers', and the railway employees' unions, with close to 100,000 members in each. All union members pay 1 per cent of their wages as a membership fee and also elect their own representatives to so-called factory committees. The latter are entrusted to deal with management and to establish the union's policies on all relevant issues. Factory committees reached, for example, the significant decision to oppose the workers' demands for higher wages; consequently, in 1946 the average industrial wage level was well below 6000 dinars or \$120 a month. At the same time Yugoslavia escaped the disastrous inflation which ruined Hungary's entire economy in a crucial "mid-reconstruction" period. Labor and management also united their forces to reduce black-market operations internally and foreign-exchange speculations

with neighboring countries. Manipulations of this sort have "literally been checked by the rope," by a systematic reign of economic violence.<sup>19</sup> The government-sponsored campaign was successful to the extent that it eliminated the confusing tangle of seven different currencies circulating in the country and reaffirmed the official monopoly of the dinar and stabilized it.

On the whole, the trade unions and factory committees have insured many material advantages to the workers. They helped to restore the tax system, opened up a fairly vigorous foreign trade, fixed the domestic price level, wages and salaries, and established a rationing scheme which is favorable to union workers in general and industrial workers in particular. Workers in heavy industries are now receiving 2200 calories a day; those in light industries, 1600 calories; while non-union members and the large class of "unemployables," the politically unreliable element, are reduced to 1000 calories daily upon presentation of their special ration cards. The drawbacks of this tightly regulated system are obvious at first glance. Every major feature is at least indirectly determined by government authorities, whose strong propaganda line pervades both unions and factory committees and controls the representatives of management and labor alike. The Communist-dominated Ministry of Social Welfare supervises all employer-employee relationships, and under its instigation a full-fledged campaign of indoctrination is now taking place. In workers' meetings and training courses Communist theories are explained in detail and propaganda directed against Britain and the United States is a constant theme. Officials of the ministry also interfere with the private lives of the workers. While some union members seem to resent this, the majority accept Communist policies; their loyalty to the regime is conditioned primarily by economic factors and considerations. New and tangible material benefits have spurred the workers to do an outstanding job in the industrial reconstruction of their country, although the lack of skilled labor is serious and retards considerably the rate of economic recovery. Even the most aggressively managed official training courses and the most rigidly enforced union discipline have failed to raise measurably the low level of technical competence and educational interest.<sup>20</sup>

#### THE FOREIGN POLICIES OF POSTWAR YUGOSLAVIA

Yugoslavia's postwar foreign policies are determined, to a large extent, by its geographic location in Southern Europe. The country is astride a gigantic highway linking Europe with Asia Minor and the

East; thus it is partly Mediterranean, partly Central European, and partly Balkan. It lies open in every direction and is subjected today, as in the past, to pressure from all sides. As it is easily accessible even from the sea, aggressive maritime countries will always reach out toward the Adriatic and Aegean seas to protect their vital interests in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Land powers, on the other hand, will become increasingly interested in the rich mineral and other resources of Yugoslavia which are rapidly advancing it into the topmost ranks of the economically and strategically significant countries of Europe. To these long-established conflicts of interest can now be added the overwhelming ideological friction between East and West.

The present rulers of Yugoslavia have never hesitated in their decision to join the Soviet Union in its stand against Western Europe and the United States. They have definite and articulate ideas concerning Russia's role. In their opinion there can be no true understanding among European countries without their acceptance of the continental leadership of the Soviet Union, based on the active cooperation of Slavic countries. "When we formulate the demand for a solidarity of the Slavic peoples," remarks a Serb historian, "we do not have to apologize to anybody, for *this demand merely expresses our best interests and most urgent needs.*"<sup>21</sup>\* Yugoslavia's role is generally seen as the keystone in the new Central European defense wall erected against the aggressive imperialism of neighboring non-Slavic peoples.

Within this narrow frame of reference the country's foreign policies are turned directly toward the East and regulated by recent alliances with the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Albania. The broad outlines of a new Slavic bloc have been officially recognized at a Pan-Slav Congress held in Belgrade in December 1946, and widely publicized in the press of the participating nations. The congress was formally opened by Tito and attended by prominent government representatives of Central and Eastern European countries. Leading speeches emphasized the progressive character of the Slav peoples and their sincere desire to continue the fight against all forms of fascism under the leadership of the U.S.S.R. The all-Slav motivation is steadily increasing in intensity, and seems to be underwritten wholeheartedly by the government of Yugoslavia.† As a movement, it is one of the

\* Italics mine.

† The Pan-Slav, pro-Soviet orientation of Tito's regime was not changed by Tito's recent conflict with the Cominform, the denunciation of the Yugoslav national administration by the Soviet press, and the removal of the Information Bu-

most important instruments of present-day Soviet propaganda. Indeed, "its curious mixture of racist and revolutionary slogans recalls in some ways the *Auslandsdeutsche* organization of Nazi times."<sup>22</sup> The Pan-Slav orientation is by no means confined to diplomatic conferences and to governmental statements of a mere propaganda value. Yugoslavia signed a significant military agreement with the Soviet Union in June 1946, providing for close cooperation between the armies and military leaders of the two countries and for immediate mutual assistance in case of external aggression. The agreement apparently affected the entire foreign political picture, for it resulted both in a more hostile attitude toward the West and in increased friendliness toward the neighboring countries of Eastern Europe. More directly, it expressed itself in enthusiastic Soviet support of Yugoslav aims at the Paris Peace Conference, where Zara, Fiume, and a score of smaller Adriatic naval bases and strategically located islands were awarded Yugoslavia in an effort to redefine her western and southern boundaries.

With a steady growth in the intensity of Soviet-Yugoslav relations the military-mindedness of Tito's regime also assumed new proportions. By 1947 defense expenditures amounted to about half of the national budget, and the combined strength of the army, navy, and air force reached a total of 350,000 soldiers under arms. This impressive figure does not account for an additional large force of the uniformed political police, or KNOJ in its generally known abbreviated form. KNOJ today forms a military elite of the politically reliable young Communists, a well-equipped, specially trained political group closely modeled on the Soviet NKVD divisions. Yugoslavia's present army resembles most modern revolutionary armies in its extremely strong political coloring and the youthfulness of its leaders. Until the break in June 1948, the military was greatly strengthened by the Soviet Union, which supplied the army with weapons, uniforms, badly needed trucks, tanks, gasoline (from Rumania), and all forms of armaments. The general trend of military thinking was best illustrated by Tito's speech in Zagreb on August 25, 1947, in which he unequivocally stated that "Yugoslavia is a small country, but our war sacrifices give us the right to speak with big countries on an entirely equal footing. With Britain and the U. S. A. . . . we speak as equals. We have great allies, *the brotherly Soviet Union*

reau from Belgrade to Bucharest. Tito's violent dispute with the new leaders of the Cominform is discussed in Chapter VIII in connection with the recent progress of Cominform strategies.

*and other Slav countries, and we have our army. If it ever becomes necessary, our people will know how to preserve their achievements and defend them.*"\*<sup>23</sup>

It is obvious from statements of this type that Tito's regime now depends solely on its Eastern orientation and systematically applies the Communist tactics developed in the Soviet Union in the course of the past twenty-five years. This revolutionary development was greatly facilitated by the complete absence of an American foreign policy toward Yugoslavia. It is felt that during the dark days of national resistance against the German invader the United States could have captured popular imagination, which could have later been turned into channels leading away from the totalitarian system offered by Tito. By 1948 such academic considerations were of little value. Tito has forcibly imposed his brand of a military dictatorship, and neither the material support nor the moral opposition of Western democracies can substantially alter the country's domestic picture. Contemporary Yugoslav writers conceive of the battle of East and West as a determined struggle between communism and capitalism. In their opinion the victorious Communist parties of the East will never be able to reach a satisfactory understanding or compromise with governments in the West. On the whole, Tito's government offers an interesting case study of postwar techniques in governmental streamlining, for it has followed the Soviet constitutional and political pattern more closely than has any other Eastern European satellite. One can safely reach the conclusion that while it achieved a surprising degree of internal stability, postwar Yugoslavia has also assumed a disturbing attitude of foreign political and military aggressiveness.†

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

1. "The Yugoslav Political Situation," *The World Today*, Jan. 1946, p. 15.
2. Cf. C. A. Macartney, *Hungary and Her Successors* (London, 1937), "The Croat Problem (1929-1936)," p. 365.
3. The Yugoslav revolution elicited immediate reaction and intense interest abroad, cf. "Army Overthrows Pro-Axis Yugoslav Regime, Nazis ask Explanation"; "U. S., Britain Pledge Aid," *The New York Times*, March 28,

\* Italics mine.

† This conclusion has not been altered by the violent dispute between Tito and the Cominform leadership. The present Yugoslav regime proved both its internal stability and foreign political aggressiveness by resisting the criticism and political pressure of the Cominform. For further discussion, cf. Chapter VIII, pages 262-268.

- 1941; "Yugoslavs Oust Pro-Axis Regime, Prepare for War," *New York Herald Tribune*, March 28, 1941; and *What March 27 Means to the Yugoslav Peoples*, by Sava N. Kosanovic, Yugoslav Ambassador to the U. S. (Washington, 1947).
4. Cf. M. A. Western, "Liberty in Yugoslavia," *International Journal*, Vol. I, No. 1, Jan. 1946, pp. 48-54; cf. also "Progress in Yugoslavia Today," *The World Today*, Feb. 1946, pp. 47-48.
  5. Cf. Constitution, Article 74, enumerating under seventeen major headings the functions of the new Presidium.
  6. Cf. Alex N. Dragnich, "Yugoslavia's New Constitution," *Current History*, Vol. X, No. 57, May 1946, p. 421 *et seq.*
  7. Michael B. Petrovich, "The Central Government of Yugoslavia," *Political Science Quarterly*, Dec. 1947, pp. 526-527.
  8. Cf. Hugh Seton-Watson, "Yugoslavia Today," *International Journal*, Vol. II, No. 2, Spring 1947, pp. 158-159. This article presents an accurate and up-to-date account of the political significance of Yugoslavia's postwar army and police system. Certain of Seton-Watson's personal conclusions are unacceptable in the light of recent Danubian developments. A surprisingly mild and benevolent appraisal of the entire police problem is this statement: "It should however be realized that in the present exceptional conditions some sort of political police must exist, and that Balkan ways of treating prisoners cannot be quickly changed."—*Ibid.*, p. 159.
  9. Cf. speech by Marshal Josip Broz Tito at the second Congress of the People's Front of Yugoslavia, Sept. 27, 1947. Special Reprint by Information Officer, Yugoslav Embassy, Washington.
  10. Cf. *The People's Front and the Communist Party*, in speech by Marshal Tito, *ibid.*, pp. 17-18.
  11. Cf. M. A. Western, "Liberty in Yugoslavia," *loc. cit.*, p. 52; cf. also C. L. Sulzberger, "Yugoslavs Drive Ruthlessly toward Communist State," *The New York Times*, Nov. 11, 1946.
  12. Quoted in full detail in *The Case of Archbishop Stepinac*, issued by Information Officer, Embassy of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, Washington, 1947; cf. pp. 48-49. Recent observers of the Yugoslav scene described the fate of the church hierarchy as desperate. Religious instruction is steadily undermined. Church properties are confiscated, priests persecuted and imprisoned. Religious freedom has disappeared, but anti-religious propaganda is nation wide and leads to intolerance and amorality. The repressive activities of the Tito regime invade every sphere of national life and thus engender resistance among the masses of the people. Cf. Ray-



- mond Daniell, "Pattern for a Totalitarian State," *The New York Times*, April 11, 1948.
13. Cf. S. C., "Political Forces in Yugoslavia Today," *The World Today*, Nov. 1946, p. 540.
  14. Cf. George Radin, *Economic Reconstruction in Yugoslavia* (New York, 1946), p. 161.
  15. Both of these plans offering definite settlements of Yugoslavia's agricultural problem are well analyzed by Otto von Franges, in *Die Bevölkerungsdichte als Triebkraft der Wirtschaftspolitik der Südosteuropäischen Bauernstaaten* (Jena, 1939), pp. 32-33.
  16. In April 1948 the Yugoslav Parliament delivered a final blow to all private enterprises above the level of artisan and small shopkeeper. It decreed immediate nationalization of 3100 privately owned businesses which previously had escaped state control. With these amendments of the original nationalization law, the government achieved full control of industry, large and small. "The last vestiges of capitalism are gone," stated the chief of the National Planning Commission. "*The state apparatus has developed sufficiently to take over all industry.*" (Italics mine.) Cf. Homer Bigart, "Tito Completes Taking Over of Private Trade," *New York Herald Tribune*, April 30, 1948.
  17. Cf. "The Nationalization of Yugoslav Economy," *Új Magyarországnak* (Budapest), Jan. 25, 1947.
  18. Cf. Jenő Mattyasovszky, "The Reconstruction of Yugoslavia—and a Few Lessons to Be Learned," *Új Magyarországnak* (Budapest), Aug. 9, 1947, p. 8.
  19. Cf. Hal Lehrman, "Yugoslavia Revisited," *The Fortnightly*, Aug. 1946, pp. 99-106.
  20. These basic economic problems are brilliantly analyzed in "Workers and Industry, Danubian Outlook," *The Economist*, Jan. 25, 1947, pp. 132-134.
  21. Cf. Lazare Marcovitch, *La Politique Extérieure de la Yougoslavie* (Paris, 1935), p. 344.
  22. Cf. "'Coordination' in the Balkans," *The Economist*, Dec. 28, 1946, p. 1044.
  23. "Tito's Speech," *East Europe*, Sept. 4, 1947, p. 5.

## VII • Bulgaria

Bulgaria's national culture and ethnic traditions were deeply influenced by converging historic influences. Its geographic location afforded the country three distinct but equally useful outlets.\* Essentially a Danubian nation, Bulgaria has direct access to the Black Sea and close geographic if not political ties to the Aegean Sea.<sup>1</sup> A strong and persistent Western influence penetrated Bulgaria in the nineteenth century, finding its way by the most direct route, the Danube Valley, while Slavic ideas seeped in steadily from the East. This mixture of two cultures created a unique combination of Western patterns of behavior, superimposed on a robust and genuine Slavic tradition.

Bulgarian history unfolds as a ceaseless struggle for Slavic supremacy *against* both Turkish and Western authority. Turkish rule was brutal and oppressive. It lingered on in Bulgaria long after the liberation of other Danubian countries and obstructed the emergence of an independent Bulgarian nation until 1878. Its unfortunate political heritage weakened the people's sense of independence, frustrated any tradition for self-government, and reduced the nation to the dubious role of a pawn in Southeastern European power-politics. Bulgarians first attempted to liberate themselves from the Turkish yoke in 1876. The knowledge that such a coup was contemplated against them, led the Moslems to country-wide atrocities in which several thousand people were massacred. It was the Turks' only method of suppressing risings or responding to demands for better government. When the news reached Russia, popular indignation aroused the government, which,

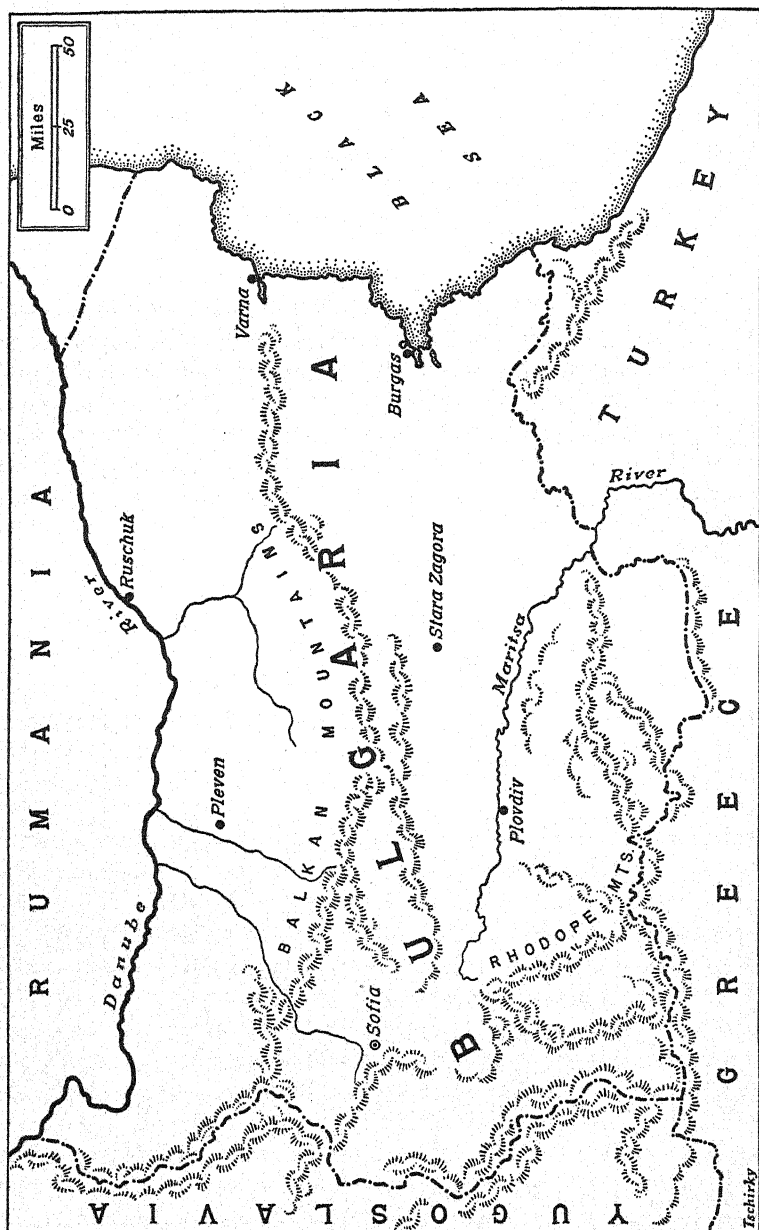
\* Two great natural routes cut across Bulgaria, both of them age-old channels for population migration and for military invasions which have plagued the Bulgarian people since early Roman days. One is the overland route running southwest from Central Asia by way of Russia, Rumania, and Bulgaria into Greece. The other is the timeworn path running northwest from Asia Minor to Central Europe. Stretching across the Dardanelles, this route connects Bulgaria through the lower Danube Valley with Turkey.

claiming to be the protector of Christians under Turkish rule, declared war a few months later. After Turkey was beaten, Bulgaria was established as a principality by the Treaty of San Stefano, which in 1878 led to the Treaty of Berlin. Although Great Britain and Austria-Hungary were instrumental in supporting the cause of Bulgarian independence, a grateful people acknowledged Russia as their actual deliverer. This factor has greatly influenced the country's recent development and has accentuated a pro-Russian, Pan-Slavic national orientation.

The trend was briefly interrupted when the Bulgarian Parliament selected a non-Russian candidate as monarch. King Ferdinand, formerly an unknown German officer, treated Russia as the archenemy of Bulgaria, implicated the country in the Balkan Wars of the twentieth century, and finally paved the way for her entry in World War I on the side of Germany and Austria. Along with other members of the Central Powers, Bulgaria emerged in 1918 as a thoroughly demoralized and vanquished country. She not only lost valuable territory to surrounding nations but felt that her leaders' decision to participate in the war against Russia was an outright betrayal of the country which had liberated her from Turkish rule. This conviction of political and moral defeat set the stage for the anticlimactic history of the interwar period, which began with a violent revolutionary outburst (1919-1923) and was followed by long years of authoritarian reaction.

#### POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT (1918-1944)

The period of revolutionary outburst was marked by the rise and fall of a peasant dictatorship, and by the iron rule of a strong man, Alexander Stambolisky. This peasant leader had a forceful and, in many respects, brilliant personality which was unfortunately marred by arbitrariness and other unpleasant characteristics. The regime ruthlessly liquidated opposition politicians, condemned to death, jailed, or exiled ministers of the previous war cabinets and, in general, carried on a persecution of the intelligentsia. A purely peasant government ran the national administration, and a new Agrarian party achieved supreme political power. This party government was actually a disguised dictatorship under which the outward forms of parliamentarianism barely survived. Parliaments seldom had any authority in Bulgaria, most of them serving as mere advisory bodies whose members were not even permitted to represent political parties.



Stambolisky's regime is best known for its agrarian reforms, which honestly tried to create a new, democratic basis of land tenure and landholdings. As a result of drastic redistributions of the land, most peasants became independent proprietors with adequate small estates of their own. With over 80 per cent of the population engaged in agriculture, the country's economic needs were fairly well satisfied in the nineteen twenties. Redivision of the land improved agricultural conditions most spectacularly in the heart of the country, the fertile and spacious basin of Eastern Rumelia. In the utter absence of a landed aristocracy and large estates, Bulgaria developed a healthier property structure of small- and middle-sized farms than did any other Danubian state.

The price Bulgaria had to pay for agrarian reforms was excessive indeed. The elevation of peasants to high ranks in the government alienated the professional classes, army leaders, and bourgeois politicians. Stambolisky's personal efforts to improve Bulgarian-Yugoslav relations by establishing a union of all South Slavs under peasant leadership also provoked the formation of various Macedonian terrorist groups which fought for the independence of their own province. Finally the disgruntled political leaders joined hands with the terrorists, and Stambolisky was killed in the bloody *coup d'état* of 1923. Reaction was violent and immediate. The year 1923 marks the beginning of a period of rising native fascism which culminated in the complete Nazification of Bulgaria. It was the era of political conspiracies, serious internal unrest bordering on civil war, abortive Communist uprisings, and unbridled terrorism prevailing in many sectors of the country. "I walk in the streets of Sofia," remarked the minister of war in June, 1924, "with the same feeling as when I was visiting the trenches during the war."<sup>2</sup> For several years the major political parties combined in a coalition government, the Democratic Entente, while opposition parties were first forced underground, then driven out of existence. The Entente served as an interesting prewar precedent for the type of forced interparty coalition exemplified by Bulgaria's present-day Fatherland Front. It was a real political amalgam including certain compromised politicians whose presence frequently discouraged the more idealistically disposed statesmen from joining the government.<sup>3</sup> The coalition itself was based on remnants of Bulgaria's two historic parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives. The former distinguished itself as the large national party responsible for the creation of Bulgaria's successful constitution of 1879, while the latter was made up of the small group of wealthy

landowners and businessmen who formed "the obscurantist, microscopic party which always has tried and which always will try to restrict the rights and liberties of the people."<sup>4</sup> The ruling group also included elements of the former Radical and Democratic parties, the new Military League, and Zveno. The last two groups represented the steadily increasing influence of the regular army, especially of the younger officers who were responsible for overthrowing the former peasant regime and who now set out to establish a tightly organized military dictatorship of their own. Both the League and Zveno fought for the elimination of all independent parties and the establishment, through the political reorganization of the state, of a new and strong government based on corporative principles. Zveno was headed by two army colonels who had long been active in Bulgarian domestic politics. Damian Velchev and Kimon Georgiev were the principal representatives of the regimes established by various *coup d'états* in the early thirties and were active leaders of the governments which skillfully used Boris, the monarch, as their figurehead. The Zveno leaders believed in friendly relations between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, frowned on the activities of IMRO, the Macedonian terrorist group, and were anxious to rid the country of opposition parties which seemed to hinder the regime in dealing with the political and economic crisis.

The two political groups which were particularly exposed to the government's wrath were the Agrarians and the Communists. Both parties preached revolution and frequently collaborated with each other in bolstering their resistance to the national administration. The government outlawed the Communist party in 1924, forcing its manifold activities into underground channels. This revolutionary and illegal background resulted in fanaticism and keen discipline among party members and brought Bulgaria's Communists close to the Soviet Union, which subsidized them and strongly encouraged their leaders in exile. Gradually, the Communists resorted to new techniques, trying to emerge into the open and regain lost political power. Georgi Dimitrov, present head of the Bulgarian People's Republic, worked from Vienna to resurrect the party under various other names and false labels. In 1931 the outlawed Communist party managed to send several deputies (about 12 per cent of the total number) to Parliament, carefully camouflaged as workingmen. The Bulgarian "Labor party" was dissolved by the supreme court, which charged that it had been "financed by Moscow." Later, an "Independent Labor party" developed which also attracted the politically homeless Communist

voters.<sup>5</sup> The Agrarians, disastrously weakened by Stambolisky's death, offered no distinct ideology to compete with that of the Communists. Internal revolution had been the declared aim of both parties, but it was obvious from the beginning that Russia, traditional protector of the Bulgarian people, stood behind the native leaders of Communism laying the groundwork for an ideological "liberation" of the country. The early popularity of an outlawed Communist movement is no surprise to the student of Bulgarian politics. The interwar period was marked by such a dearth of vigorous opposition parties that the people's political choice was exceedingly limited. In the absence of an energetic Socialist movement the Communists successfully offered their brand of radical resistance to governmental oppression. The steady stream of Russian propaganda, the close relations between Bulgarian Communist leaders and their Russian colleagues, the undeniable similarity of the racial background and language of the two peoples were factors which contributed effectively to an unfolding of Communist influence in prewar Bulgaria. Industrial workers and disgruntled peasants were apparently convinced that Bolshevism could hardly make matters worse and might even bring some relief in its wake. Pro-Soviet propaganda stressed the fight for the emancipation of a third of the Bulgarian people from "intolerable foreign servitude" which had marked the succession of bourgeois regimes. These underground activities were precursors of the amazing postwar progress and development of the Communist movement.

The ideological struggle of the nineteen thirties was decided unequivocally in favor of official government forces. By 1940 an unbroken line of fascist governments had succeeded in imposing a strict and unwavering military rule. The pro-Nazi orientation was further accentuated by King Boris, considered the most calculating of all prewar Balkan monarchs. He was clever and, in an inconspicuous way, knew how to bend men and institutions to his will. He alone among Danubian sovereigns linked his fate voluntarily to that of Hitler.<sup>6</sup> Increasing pressure was exerted by the king, who feared Germany less than he did Russia, and did not shrink from an all-out military alliance with Hitler. Bulgaria's ruling class expected booming business and substantial economic and territorial rewards for supporting the cause of triumphant Axis powers. Dismissing the timely warning of a handful of democratic opposition leaders, Boris willingly yielded to Nazi demands, and early in 1941 German troops poured in from neighboring Rumania, assuming direct military control over the new Balkan satellite. In March 1941

the government enthusiastically signed the notorious Axis Tripartite Pact, and for the following three and a half years Bulgaria served as a key country in the German penetration of Southeastern Europe. She also became a convenient forward base, an ideally suited geographic springboard for launching Operation Barbarossa, the Hitlerian invasion of the Soviet Union. There was only one noticeable limitation to Bulgaria's participation in the Axis war effort: her government cautiously refrained from declaring war on the Soviet Union.

#### THE FATHERLAND FRONT EMERGES (1944-1945)

The appearance of the Red army on Bulgarian soil in September 1944 marked the outbreak of a full-fledged national revolution. A new government was desperately needed, for Bulgaria's international position had now reached its nadir. Of all Danubian countries she was the only one at war with both the United Nations and the Axis powers. First she broke from Hitler's camp and, in a last-minute effort to improve her fading prestige and endangered strategic position, declared war on Germany. The political turnabout occurred too late, however, and while fighting the Axis, the discredited and unpopular Bulgarian cabinet had to face a sudden declaration of war by the Soviet Union. The revolutionary government which emerged in September 1944, replacing the earlier regime, was called upon to extricate the country from its unenviable position of fighting simultaneously both blocs of World War II belligerents.

A flexible opposition group with a democratic program, the new Fatherland Front seemed capable of solving the country's domestic and foreign problems. It was based on a broad coalition of resistance parties which effectively represented the major political ideas and party groupings of the prewar and wartime era. Zveno, the interesting combination of army officers and businessmen, now reappeared in close alliance with the Workers' party (Communists), the Social Democrats, a small Radical party, and the powerful Agrarian National Union. The latter assumed a role of ephemeral prominence, thanks to the vigorous personality and political convictions of its two leaders, Dr. G. M. Dimitrov and Nikola Petkov, both of whom were eventually destined to a forced withdrawal from Bulgaria's public life.

Political power was temporarily shared by Zveno and the Communists. Although Kimon Georgiev of the former was appointed prime minister, the Communists acquired the key ministries of Interior and



Justice. This decisive move not only established them in control of the entire administrative, police, and judicial system of the country but offered an immediate chance of further extending and consolidating Communist power. Within a few weeks after liberation, the Workers' party took over the portfolios basic to economic reconstruction: the ministries of Health, Electrification, Finance, and Industry were filled by members of the Communist party. Special committees of the Fatherland Front were created and, subordinated to a National Committee of the Fatherland Front, gradually assumed the functions of "soviets" entrusted with the speedy collectivization and transformation of domestic economy. The armistice of October 1944 concluded the brief span of a "state of war" between the U.S.S.R. and Bulgaria, opening the country to Russian occupation troops and military government officials. By declaring war on Bulgaria Russia had not only caught its Western allies off guard, but also gained a predominant position as occupying power of the small satellite country. Energetic Soviet support, in turn, spurred local Communists to engage in the political maneuvers and tactical moves which were so successfully carried out in neighboring Yugoslavia. Soon the Communists were in bitter conflict with members of Zveno and the Socialist and Peasant parties, which found coalition rule within the amorphous and ineffective Fatherland Front more and more difficult as well as impractical.<sup>7</sup>

#### PURGES AND WAR CRIME TRIALS

Harmonious cooperation among these political groups was frustrated by the Communists, who had developed the most effective underground organization during the war and were firmly convinced that throughout the long years of Axis occupation they had been the backbone, the only active participants, in the national resistance movement against the Nazis and their hirelings. Faced with the repressive methods of this machinery and the ideological intolerance of the Workers' party, even the most cooperative coalition groups were gradually reduced to the limited and unsatisfactory role of political opposition. Forced into one strategic retreat after another, opposition groups further weakened themselves by staying away from national elections and urging postponement of the country's most pressing constitutional problems. Because of their liberal policies in admitting new members, they opened their ranks to infiltration by the remnants of pro-Fascist elements, and to people who had benefited under German domination and were now searching for the protection of well-established political parties. Bul-

garia's tense internal situation thus deteriorated rapidly, as the inevitable result of Communist aggressiveness matched by the indecisiveness of other political parties. By the middle of 1945 a crisis was foreshadowed, the passions were growing, the accusations became graver, the exchange of words sharper. In a speech in Sofia Andrei Vyshinski clearly voiced the Soviet viewpoint on the political attitude and future destinies of the non-Communist parties. "All who place the interests of their particular groups above the interests of their motherland, and will not help the Bulgarian democratic government in its responsible task of the reconstruction of the country, do not represent the interests of the people. History will by-pass them and pursue its own course."<sup>8</sup> Shortly after his postwar reappearance in his home country, Communist leader Georgi Dimitrov issued a similar public warning to the opposition: "These are the people who are trying by every means to impede an orderly international settlement for the Fatherland Front of Bulgaria, who organize economic sabotage, set up terror bands and rely on foreign support to fight against the people's authority. . . . They are spreading rumors throughout the country that very soon they will form the government of Bulgaria."<sup>9</sup>

The ominous statements of both Soviet and Bulgarian policy makers revealed the exact itinerary of the trip leading to the complete consolidation of Communist power. Progress depended on the speed by which opposition forces were to be destroyed. Communist leadership, therefore, had to eliminate from most coalition organizations the authentic members of Agrarian, Socialist, and Zveno parties. It was equally plain that the scattered groups would be no match for the experienced hierarchy of the Workers' party, backed by Russia and the Red army. A sweeping purge was aimed at all but the most conspicuously subservient members of these "bourgeois organizations," who were unceremoniously dismissed from their government posts. Some, like the influential and aggressively anti-Nazi peasant leader, Dr. G. M. Dimitrov, were able to choose exile and carry on their political activities in England or the United States, but most of the opposition leaders were jailed and eventually sentenced to death. The purging of Zveno and the Socialists was fairly easy: the Communists simply brushed them aside, using brute force wherever needed. A few Socialists, members of a highly opportunistic left wing, went with the Communists and were soon transformed into the loudest and most anxious supporters of the new Fatherland Front "democracy." The purge of the Peasant party was more difficult. The size and historic traditions of the party, the

outstanding anti-Fascist record of its prominent members, led to a long and weary resistance to the Communists. The struggle of the two groups finally "resulted in an internal upheaval, the resignation of four cabinet ministers and grave international repercussions."<sup>10</sup>

During this phase of Bulgarian politics, there appeared a full-fledged government within the government. The *visible government* had the external earmarks of authority without its true substance. The *invisible government*, on the other hand, exercised real power in the country and concentrated its efforts on preparing a full-fledged Communist seizure of the visible government. The central National Committee of the Fatherland Front was the actual motivating force of this extraconstitutional nucleus. The committee, ruled with a firm hand by the Number One woman Communist, Tsola Dragoicheva, was in charge of purges, war-crime trials, and, in a broader sense, the suppression of all major civil liberties. In this campaign technical guidance was given by the popular militia, the new Communist police which gradually displaced the regular police force. The militia was called into action to silence and neutralize the "enemies of the new state," the scattered forces of a political opposition. A link between the official Fatherland Front government and Communist party leadership was provided in the person of Anton Yugov, minister of the interior, who was responsible from the beginning for the Sovietization of the country's entire police system. Throughout 1945 and 1946 the repressive measures against non-Communist political parties were steadily intensified. The well-tried weapons of Communist infiltration and domination succeeded in bringing a reign of terror to Bulgaria, virtually as complete and threatening as in neighboring Yugoslavia. The political techniques applied in the two countries were essentially identical, although the opposition could not be ignored here quite as abruptly, the press could not be muzzled as openly, and the entire domestic revolution had to move more slowly.

Following Communist practice in other countries, the Bulgarian Workers' party played a leading role in instituting trials of war criminals. The term "war criminal" was broadly interpreted, and in less than two years some eleven thousand persons were brought to trial, judged guilty of collaboration, and held responsible for the country's catastrophic entrance into war on the side of Germany. A law for the Defense of the People's Authority (1945) established people's courts for the express purpose of punishing all "Fascists and collaborators." A subsequent Law of Restitution provided in detail for further economic

penalties against war criminals, who had to return all property gained or expropriated during the period of German occupation. With the aid of these sweeping legal provisions there was no difficulty or delay in organizing a thorough cleanup of reactionaries, Fascists, suspected Fascists, and, in fact, anyone who held a position of responsibility during the years of alliance with the Axis. People's courts condemned to death the three former regents of the country and all members of two particularly notorious collaborationist wartime cabinets. Almost every member of a third pro-Fascist cabinet was also condemned to death, two members were given life imprisonment in solitary confinement, and every member was deprived of his civil rights. By February 1945 three regents and twenty-two cabinet ministers, as well as numerous parliamentary deputies, were among the more than two thousand persons who received death sentences, which were promptly carried out.<sup>11</sup> No other Danubian country has undergone such a wholesale purging of "war criminals" and on a comparably broad juridical basis.

The originally serious and purposeful trials soon degenerated into a thinly camouflaged ideological campaign. New leaders of the Fatherland Front increasingly resorted to the people's court procedure as a method of exterminating political opponents. Hundreds of administrators, civil servants, university professors, and journalists were sentenced to death and executed. The seemingly endless flow of trials was staged and carefully organized by Minister of the Interior Yugov and by Mrs. Dragoicheva in her capacity as secretary of the National Fatherland Front Committee. Obviously the Communists, who received little mercy when they were in opposition, now repaid this ruthlessness in kind and with their own brand of sheer violence. After a few months of uninterrupted judicial murder, the wholesale killings revolted a few of the more moderate elements in the Workers' party and the trials were temporarily suspended.\* The second phase of the purges showed a considerable change of emphasis. It was aimed at a

\* It is important to note that Bulgaria's armistice with the Soviet Union and the Western Allies, signed in Moscow on October 28, 1944, contained two provisions concerning war crimes and Fascist criminals. According to Article 6, the government of Bulgaria would cooperate in the apprehension and trial of persons accused of war crimes. Article 7 further elaborates the issue. The government of Bulgaria undertook to dissolve immediately all pro-Hitler or other Fascist political and military organizations, and not to tolerate the existence of such organizations in the future. These provisions have a far-reaching significance in a country which labored under rightist dictatorships for well over a decade and fully cooperated with Hitler. While a limited purge of the real criminals would have been justified even by Western standards, the terrifying possibilities of the war-crime issue should have been foreseen by England and the United States.

thorough *Gleichschaltung* of the army, the purging of officers whose views antagonized the government. The army leaders now threatened as "reactionary and fascist" elements were mostly members of Zveno, the only undivided non-Communist party in the Fatherland Front. In the summer of 1946 thousands of officers were removed and replaced by Workers' party members. Communist-staged purges and large-scale infiltration proved doubly effective at this juncture of domestic developments; it eliminated the chance of political resistance by the military and broke the power of Zveno, a potential competitor of Communist leadership.

The major target of the military purge was non-Communist Minister of War General Damian Velchev, who resisted the Sovietization of the Bulgarian army and temporarily succeeded in reducing external political influences. For his reluctance to accept the appointment of Soviet-designated political commissars to various army units, he was suddenly implicated in the treason trial of Yugoslav General Mihailovich and labeled a leading Fascist. After his name was mentioned by several of the trial's witnesses, General Velchev was completely paralyzed by a government decree transferring his powers to a parliamentary commission and reintroducing political commissars in all formations of the army. After hundreds of Velchev's close collaborators were dismissed, he himself was declared to have taken a "leave of absence," and finally relieved of his post.<sup>12</sup> Because of the last-minute intervention of his more subservient Zveno friends, Velchev did not have to face the people's court but was sent to Switzerland instead, where he became the Minister from Bulgaria. The key position of minister of war did not remain vacant, for Damianov, a trusted Communist and member of the party's semisecret Political Bureau, was immediately appointed head of the army. By the fall of 1946 both the civilian and the military phases of the nation-wide purge were completed. The trials themselves followed the well-known pattern so fully developed by the Hungarian and Yugoslav judicial system. They were particularly ingenious in Bulgaria, where army and political opposition were so closely intertwined that a blow struck against one effectively neutralized the other as well. Consequently, Communist infiltration into the army also broke Zveno's back, transforming it into one of the insignificant and servile collaborationist groups of the patriotic-front government. The initial stage of the power struggle was over: the original coalition cabinet had yielded most of its authority to the Communist party in which Georgi Dimitrov gradually emerged as the undisputed leader.

## THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS OF 1946

Several important features of Bulgaria's public life had to be fundamentally altered in order to complete its *Gleichschaltung* into a thoroughly Sovietized state. The country's prewar constitutional structure had to be torn down, a new parliament elected, a more obedient cabinet appointed, and wholesale economic reforms initiated. A major constitutional step marked the end of Bulgarian monarchy. A plebiscite was held in September 1946, for the first time in the nation's history, to decide on the constitutional form of the state. The outcome of this popular referendum was obvious and clear cut from the beginning. All political parties took a determined stand against the monarchy and in favor of a republic. Bulgaria's rulers were held personally responsible for the three military disasters which had struck her people within thirty years, for antagonizing neighbors, for surrendering to Germany and thus preparing the assault against the Soviet Union, and, finally, for turning the country into a colony for German economic exploitation. Eighty-five per cent of the voters expressed themselves for abrogation of the monarchy and establishment of a people's republic. Thus terminated the provisional regency which was substituted for the unpopular dynasty in September 1944 during the first upheaval of liberation.

Immediately following the decisive liquidation of the monarchy, elections were set for a Sobranie, a national parliament which could be entrusted with the planning and writing of a new "popular-democratic" constitution. Because of firm pressure and repeated insistence by the British and American governments,<sup>13</sup> the elections of October 27, 1946, were marked by two outstanding developments: they assured the use of separate electoral lists for all parties and full participation for the opposition. The parties of the Fatherland Front, while agreeing in advance to continue their coalition regardless of election results, developed a method which allowed the electors to vote for any of the five individual parties. The opposition Agrarians also formed a coalition and agreed on a single list with at least one other party, the opposition Socialists. In view of prevailing Danubian political conditions, the 1946 elections produced surprising results. In spite of severe police persecution of non-Communist political elements before and during the elections, the opposition obtained 22 per cent of the total vote, or 101 seats in Parliament. This high ratio of opposition votes reflects a widespread popular dissatisfaction with the repressive methods of Soviet occupa-

tion forces. The bulk of parliamentary representation was gained by the victorious government bloc through which the Communist party obtained an absolute majority of the votes in the new Parliament. The 277 seats of the Communists projected them into the national limelight as the strongest party in the government coalition. The middle-class parties of Zveno, Social Democrats, and Radicals suffered heavy and decisive defeat. The formerly powerful Agrarians, now hopelessly split between government and opposition, polled considerably fewer votes than expected. The sweeping Communist victory had instantaneous repercussions in forcing several moderate politicians out of the government. Even the prime minister, Kimon Georgiev of Zveno, lost his seat in the election, an ominous accident "liable to happen to politicians who make electoral bargains with Communists."<sup>14</sup> Georgiev's post was taken by G. Dimitrov, who consolidated the Communist hold over the government by assigning key cabinet posts to members of the party, most of whom happened to be members of the Bulgarian Political Bureau.

What was the significance of these results for the future of the new republic? The problem of immediate interest was the drastic change in the composition of Parliament and the cabinet. These two Communist-dominated bodies no longer reflected the real distribution of political strength in the country. The Communists' coalition policies have proved eminently successful in solidifying their own ranks, in breaking up the power of their partners in the Fatherland Front, and in virtually eliminating all opposition parties in spite of their strong electoral showing. A carefully streamlined Parliament automatically secured acceptance of the government's project for a new constitution. Within two weeks of the national elections the Constituent Assembly actually opened its deliberations of the draft constitution based on the republican form of government. It was also called upon to coordinate the legal system of the country with the presumably conflicting provisions of the new constitution. Under Communist guidance, Parliament was finally expected to adopt a comprehensive plan for the economic reconstruction and development of the country.

#### THE NEW PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC (1947-1948)

The present-day People's Republic of Bulgaria rests on the twin foundations of a new constitution and a thoroughly reorganized Fatherland Front, that essential device of the postwar one-party system. The

process of constitution making was long and weary; it was coupled with stormy parliamentary debates which caused the final collapse and liquidation of remaining opposition groups. The present Communist-inspired constitution has little in common with the historic traditions of nineteenth-century juridical development in Bulgaria. It represents a sharp break from the famous Tirnovo constitution of 1879 which, at the time of its creation, was widely hailed as the most liberal legal document in Europe.

For more than six decades the principles of 1879 guided the constitutional development of the country, although the authoritarian trend of internal politics seldom corresponded to the progressive ideas of the early constitution. Bulgaria was established as a hereditary monarchy with definite legal guarantees against absolutistic rule. The king, for example, could not promulgate any decrees without the consent of the Assembly, and no punishment could be inflicted without the sanction of the law. Civil rights were carefully defined and encompassed all variants of human freedoms. Slavery, the distressing heritage of centuries of oppressive Turkish domination, was abolished ("Every serf is free as soon as he sets foot on Bulgarian soil"), and such rights as the formation of independent political parties and a free education were recognized. New governmental bodies were created with direct responsibility to Parliament; a Board of Control was appointed to regulate the administration of public affairs and to delimit the authority of its officials.

The original draft of the new constitution was carefully drawn up by a special committee of representatives of the five Fatherland Front parties. The draft borrowed the sweeping bill of rights section of the Tirnovo constitution, enumerating in particular the rights to a political equality of the people and the freedom of press, speech, and assembly. It strongly emphasized the role of a new president of the republic, who would enjoy prerogatives of the king as head of the state, and would be elected for a four-year term. The governmental functions of a National Assembly are also described in a concise manner; it was to elect the head of the state, and the prime minister, whose cabinet would be responsible to the Assembly. On the whole, the first draft of the new constitution set up the framework of a presidential form of government, combined with the new features of a postwar people's republic. Recurring emphasis on the roles of the head of the state and of the national Parliament is responsible for a strong resemblance between this draft and the Czech constitution of 1920. Interestingly, however,



the final draft of the constitution showed significant structural changes from the first version. A special, hand-picked parliamentary commission departed considerably from earlier precedents and adhered closely to the familiar Soviet and Yugoslav legal patterns. By the time this draft was submitted to Parliament (November 1947), opposition members had long been forced to withdraw from participation in the constitution-making process.

The final version abolished the institution of President of the Republic; the functions of the president were transferred to a Presidium of the National Assembly which, like its Yugoslav equivalent, wields all major executive functions in the new state, has all prerogatives of the head of the republic, and consists of a president, two vice presidents, a secretary, and fifteen members.\* The change from presidential to a presidium form of government is the essence of this second and fully Sovietized draft. Minor modifications refer to an increase in the number of cabinet ministers; new portfolios were established for Communal Economy and Work, Railways, Motor and Water Communications, and Mines. The process of constitutional amendment was also subjected to reform. The national referendum was abolished, and it was decreed that changes could be introduced into the new constitution by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly. This flexible procedure, which greatly simplifies constitutional changes and offers broad amendment possibilities to the majority party in parliament, is an essential attribute of the streamlined one-party state structure.

By a unanimous vote of Parliament the second draft was accepted as the new postwar constitution of Bulgaria. Since December 1947 its provisions have governed and determined every important political development on the road leading toward the monolithic state. Most of the constitution is devoted to the establishment of elaborate new "organs of state power," governmental agencies which generally combine legislative, executive, and frequently even judicial functions. The fusion of governmental powers is as complete and intricate here as in the Yugoslav constitutional machinery. The postwar people's republic shies away from the principle of separation of powers, a traditional and basic feature of democratic forms of government. State power asserts itself here through the medium of four major instrumentalities: the

\* The Partisan distribution of the first Presidium was as follows: Of the 15 members 8 were Communists, 2 Socialists, 2 Zveno, 2 Agrarians, and 1 was Radical. For a more detailed discussion of the executive function of the Presidium, cf. pages 229-230 in this chapter.

National Assembly, the Presidium, the Government or Council of Ministers, and the Local People's Councils.\*

#### THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

In strictly legal terms the National Assembly outweighs other governmental agencies and "is the supreme organ of the State power" (Article 15). It is a unicameral legislature based on a house of deputies. It has the usual broad powers of a national Parliament, carefully enumerated under eleven separate headings. The Assembly, significantly, elects members of the Presidium, appoints members of the cabinet, decides on the establishment of new ministries and the abolition, fusion, or renaming of existing ministries. It approves the state's new economic plan, decides on the extent of the nationalization of economic enterprises and the introduction of state monopolies. It decides questions of war and peace or issues concerning the cession, exchange, or increase of the territory of the people's republic.

Several controversial features of the new National Assembly are worthy of further analysis. Although in the formal statement of the constitution, the Assembly is "the only legislative organ of the People's Republic of Bulgaria" (Article 16), other governmental agencies, notably the Presidium and even local soviets, have the jurisdictional authority to legislate, publish, and interpret the laws "in a way binding on all" (Article 34). There is an obvious contradiction here between constitutional pronouncement and actual practice. The concept of Parliament's legislative supremacy is hazy and indefinite, as the prerogatives of creating laws are shared by several of the highest state organs. The Yugoslav constitution is more explicit on the problem of the source of legislative power. It limits the field of *parliamentary* legislation, allowing other agencies similar legislative jurisdiction in their own field of competence. "The People's Assembly of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia exercises exclusively the power of legislation in *all matters within the jurisdiction of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia*,"† states Article 51 of the constitution of 1946.

A major controversy appears in the compromise solution of the deputies' parliamentary immunity. The legal tradition of complete immunity runs counter to the practice of police states which, in their

\* For the exact legal delimitation of the functions of each state organ, cf. the Constitution itself, Appendix, pages 323-339. As the most characteristic of all post-war Danubian constitutions, the Bulgarian constitution of 1947 is reproduced in full in the Appendix. °

† Italics mine.

indiscriminate mania of persecution, ignore all juridical distinction between a member of the national Parliament and the ordinary citizen. The ambivalent provision of the constitution outlines the customary concept of immunity: "Deputies cannot be detained or prosecuted except for grave offenses and with the consent of the National Assembly . . ." (Article 29), but immediately projects a convenient excuse for breaking down parliamentary immunity: "Such permission is not necessary if a deputy has been apprehended in the commission of a grave criminal offense, in which case it is sufficient to notify the Presidium of the National Assembly" (*ibid.*). On the whole, the Bulgarian government can freely determine the extent and gravity of a "criminal offense," and the subterfuge of Article 29 has frequently been invoked against members of a dwindling parliamentary opposition who have been held criminally responsible for political attitudes and utterances. Nikola Petkov and his Agrarian followers have been deprived in this fashion of their immunity and surrendered to people's courts for summary trial. In the hands of a totalitarian government the limited use and conditional application of this parliamentary privilege has gradually developed into a major repressive weapon.

#### THE PRESIDUM OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The Presidium assumes the executive leadership of the state, and in this significant capacity fulfills a large number of varied governmental functions. Essentially it is a permanent nineteen-member legislative-executive committee responsible to the National Assembly. While the Assembly is the symbolic source of power in the state, the Presidium emerges as a powerful governmental organ, intricately combining the features of the Soviet Politburo and the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States Senate. Its broad activities are listed under nineteen separate headings in the constitution (Article 35). The Presidium summons the National Assembly, fixes the date for its election, publishes and interprets the laws passed by the National Assembly, issues edicts, and represents the people's republic in its international relations. It also ratifies or denounces international treaties, declares a state of war when the Assembly is not in session, proclaims a general or partial mobilization of the state. The Presidium acts as an *interim* committee of the National Assembly. When the Assembly is not in session, the Presidium may relieve of duty or appoint individual members of the government (§12, Article 35). The Presidium is not necessarily dissolved with the expiration of Parliament's term; on the contrary, it "continues to

exercise its functions until the newly elected National Assembly elects a new Presidium" (Article 37). This wide assortment of functions and responsibilities is another close duplication of the Yugoslav constitution, which outlines, in similar detail and under seventeen equally sweeping subheadings, the powers of its own Presidium of the People's Assembly (Article 74). Government by presidium has been gradually adopted by several Danubian countries but, as a permanent concomitant feature of the *new democracies*, it reached a climax in the constitutional structure of Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.

#### THE GOVERNMENT OR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Within the necessary limitations established by the supremacy of Parliament and Presidium, the Council of Ministers is a ranking executive and administrative organ of the state. The composition of the cabinet reflects a mechanical imitation of the Soviet, and more directly, of the Yugoslav constitution. Among new offices of the government, sharing full cabinet rank, three are most conspicuous and are characteristic of a people's republic. They are the President of the State Planning Commission, the President of the Commission for State Control, and the President of the Committee for Science, Arts, and Culture. All three positions were created as a result of nationalization, the new economic plan, and the process of further centralization of the government. The importance of these posts is further emphasized by a constitutional provision stating that either the prime minister or the vice premier can hold any of the three offices if they are not independently filled. The constitution of 1947 also provides for an unusually long list of cabinet ministers (Article 39), many of whom are directly engaged in the problems of economic reconstruction, national industrialization, and planning. The Council of Ministers is responsible to the National Assembly; when the Assembly is not in session, it is responsible and gives account to the Presidium (Article 40).

#### LOCAL PEOPLE'S COUNCILS

The people's councils are local organs of the state and embody the constitutional principle according to which all power originates with the people and belongs to them. The people's power expresses itself through the activities of local agencies, specifically through the municipal and county councils which are elected by the local population for a term of three years. The councils have broad authority centering around two main features: they direct the implementation of all eco-

nomic, social, and cultural undertakings of *local significance* (Article 49), make decisions, and issue orders in compliance with the laws and general directives of the superior organs of state power (Article 50). On the whole, local issues are directed toward and assigned to the people's councils, which are primarily concerned with regional aspects of the national administration.

Although the municipal and county councils have independent jurisdiction and a scope of action of their own, they are in turn responsible to the corresponding departments of the central administration, namely to the corresponding ministry or government official of the people's republic (Article 55). This subordination of jurisdiction offers the government an important veto power: the cabinet or its individual members have the right to *repeal* the unlawful and irregular acts of municipal and county councils. The government also has the right to *suspend the execution* of the unlawful and irregular acts of local people's councils (Article 69). The interlocking administrative relationships of these state organs are further complicated by the right of a superior people's council to dissolve an inferior council in its area and hold elections for a new people's council (Article 70). Within the framework of these legal barriers the councils are called upon to express the initiative and political concern of the people. In the Fatherland Front's official statement, the councils were created in order "to draw people into active participation in the state administration, from bottom to top."<sup>15</sup>

Propaganda communiqués proudly describe the system of people's councils as a triumph of Bulgarian communism, the mainstay of a revitalized Fatherland Front administration. The entire constitution is now visualized as a consolidation of the "historic gains of the national uprising on September ninth," the victory of democratic principles according to which "all power emanates from and belongs to the people."<sup>16</sup> Government officials further assert that the constitution, *neither a Soviet nor a Socialist document [sic]*, brought about a radical reorganization of the state apparatus. The Bulgarian state, they predict, is bound to succeed in bringing the official organs of the government nearer to the people. Their real objective is to enforce the all-pervasive influence of the central authorities of Sofia through the establishment of several concentric circles of government agencies. The price of popular participation in state administration seems to be the further, unlimited extension of a truly omnivorous government. From the national Presidium down to local people's councils, the police state exerts strong and unrelenting pressure on every citizen of the *new democracy*.

The first tangible result of these sweeping objectives was a change in the character of the Fatherland Front from a coalition government into a streamlined and unified political organization. Apparently the free association of several independent political parties ceased being a "historic necessity," and gradually lost its usefulness in the newly emerging people's republic. The Fatherland Front inevitably developed in the direction of a single political party completely subordinated to the Communists. At the same time it carefully kept alive a few imitation parties, using them as "groups in being" to preserve the impression of a vigorous and purposeful coalition government. This transformation was carried out under the personal leadership of Georgi Dimitrov, prime minister of the first Bulgarian government appointed on the basis of the constitution of 1947.

Establishment of the new Fatherland Front can readily be described as a process of *revolution by consent*. It was a Communist-staged revolution facilitated by the obedient acceptance of Communist demands. The few remaining non-Communist groups expressed their general approval of official policies and willingly joined in the final merger of all political parties, which was carried out swiftly and completed within a few weeks (November 1947—February 1948). The Social Democrats, thoroughly purged of their noncooperating right-wing members, were first to express unqualified approval. Their party congress enthusiastically demanded the immediate coordination of all labor forces by turning the Fatherland Front into an unshakable, united organization. The unanimous resolution of the congress concluded that "the Bulgarian Social Democratic Party stands for the complete unity of the workers' front."<sup>17</sup> The National Agrarian Union, equally purged of its recalcitrant leaders, was just as vocal in endorsing the new version of the Fatherland Front. Zveno joined in the stampede for a single-party state and invited Premier Dimitrov to appear in person at its congress. Dimitrov outlined the objectives of the Front in terms of policies leading to full socialism, and analyzed the limited role of individual party groupings within the framework of the mass organization. Parties will not be dissolved, but will act only in the name of the Fatherland Front and as integral parts of the larger body. A significant dilemma arises here. Individual parties are promised continued existence, yet their influence is to be used in the direction of hastening complete political unification of the Front. The price of eventual unification will be the total disappearance of individual parties and the establishment of a single, ironclad workers' party. Dimitrov clearly indicated the purpose

behind his recent political moves. At the Fatherland Front Congress held in Sofia in February 1948, he was asked whether the rigid one-party system would immediately be established. His answer was both characteristic and revealing. "That is a state which we shall reach in due course, but we do not propose to start off with it. A one-party system cannot be simply created by decree 'from above,' and in fact would be undesirable. . . . We shall eventually establish the basis which is essential for fusion . . . into the single party of the future."<sup>18</sup>

The new Front has emerged as a skillful combination of the few remaining *political parties* and certain *functional groups*. In the first category the Bulgarian Workers' party (Communist) dominates the scene and is joined by the shadowy Agrarians, Zvenoites, Social Democrats, and Radicals. The second category includes such occupational groups as the Workers' Trade Union, the Farmers' Trade Union, General Craftsmen's Union, Youth Organization, and the Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters. Both the political parties and the members of these occupational groups then select their own delegates, who convene once every two years at a national conference of the Fatherland Front. This conference acts as a supplementary parliament in debating national policies and various legislative measures and in reviewing the appointment of government officials. A large, unwieldy body of hundreds of national representatives, its role is primarily that of a governmental sounding board, a nation-wide rally of hand-picked delegates who form an obedient and even enthusiastic audience for the speeches of leading Front members and cabinet officials. Between sessions of the national conference, an interim National Committee of about 125 members exercises some of the powers of the Fatherland Front itself.

The pyramidal distribution of authority does not end here, for a smaller group is created, with even more influence on the government and more actual political power. The Permanent Bureau of the National Committee is truly the *inner sanctum* of the broad and immensely complicated Fatherland Front structure. With Dimitrov as its chairman and a selected membership of ten trustworthy political leaders, this group fulfills the functions of a political bureau, of a permanent liaison agency between government (the Fatherland Front) and party (the Bulgarian Workers' party). Bureau members hold secret meetings and reach their top-level political decisions without a dissenting vote. Dimitrov's appointment as head of the group practically guarantees the absence of opposition or a dissenting minority.<sup>19</sup> As a national organization the Front permeates every level of government, reaching

down to factories and the smallest villages. These local committees now supplement the people's councils established by the constitution. They present a complex pyramid of soviets tightly organized and strictly supervised by the central government in Sofia. The towns boast of elaborate factory committees (OFFE) and local trade union organizations (ORPS), while the villages and agricultural areas are "co-ordinated" by the new hierarchy of peasants' organizations (OZPS) and artisans' unions (OZIPS). All these Fatherland Front organs are careful translations of the Soviet system and its mechanical features into Bulgaria's reoriented public life.

### PRESS AND PROPAGANDA

Press and propaganda agencies are strictly controlled by the Fatherland Front government, which tolerates only a minimum of opposition. Of the nine daily papers of Sofia, six are officially governmental while three, theoretically, represent the opposition's political attitudes and viewpoints. The official press is as outspoken in its ideological stand and as extreme in its intolerance as the one of neighboring Yugoslavia. The Communist party's paper *Rabotnichesko Delo* equals *Borba* in every respect. Commenting on the notorious Petkov trial of the summer of 1947, *Delo* characteristically stated: "The Bulgarian Court is not governed by lynch law which murders negroes in the street. Nor is it a court of Greek monarchist-fascist reaction where the judges are dull-witted military bureaucrats. . . . Only the dark protectors of Bulgarian reaction, who regret that the criminal conspiracy led by Petkov did not succeed, can object to Petkov's sentence."<sup>20</sup> In the general coverage of political news, other government papers, notably the Fatherland Front's official *Otechestven Front*, seem to be merely a step behind the Communist publication. The Soviet command in Bulgaria has gone out of its way to make sure that the actual situation is fully grasped by the masses. It issues a propaganda publication in the Bulgarian language in which it consistently upholds the Communist party and condemns the democratic opposition parties, which are represented as antidemocratic tools of foreign countries. Following the conclusion of a final peace treaty with Bulgaria, the organ of the Soviet command wrote: "In this manner the reaction lost its last weapon concerning the supposedly irrepresentative character of the Government of the Bulgarian National Republic. The hopes of the opposition groups for foreign intervention in the internal affairs of Bulgaria have disappeared."<sup>21</sup>

The freedom of news publication is restricted and the distribution of



news considerably limited. As long as the government allows only pro-Soviet and procoalition papers to operate, the opposition press frequently disappears from circulation and its dailies are suspended much of the time. The Agrarian group's *Banner* and the Socialist *Free Nation* have barely managed to survive the emergence of a full-fledged one-party state. Similar principles apply to the operation of domestic propaganda organizations, which have been strongly encouraged if they fell in line with official policies, but ruthlessly suppressed if they championed any other cause. As a result, the whole apparatus is now in the hands of the Communist-led regime, and the opposition is barred from the use of propaganda instruments. Through its myriad agencies, particularly the people's councils and local committees, the government controls formerly independent civic organizations. Workers, officials, teachers, and professional persons are channeled into various government-sponsored clubs or unions, which dominate every aspect of the country's public life. State control of youth education is complete, and all private religious schools, on both the primary and the secondary levels, were abruptly closed. These moves dispose effectively of a potential source of opposition leadership.

The frantic activities of the official propaganda machinery culminated in the notorious Petkov case of 1947, which involved the execution of Bulgaria's most prominent opposition leader. As general secretary of the independent Agrarian party, Nikola Petkov inherited Dr. G. M. Dimitrov's role as the aggressive and vocal archenemy of the totalitarian regime. In the 1930's he was leader of the left wing of the Agrarians, fought the fascist policies of King Boris, was frequently arrested and imprisoned. During World War II he was a determined anti-Nazi and spent several months in a concentration camp on charges of being "pro-Allied." After the Russians occupied Bulgaria, Petkov became a minister without portfolio in the first coalition government. In September 1945, with the Communists gaining control of the Fatherland Front, he resigned from the cabinet and as ranking member of the Agrarian party gradually assumed leadership of the opposition. By early 1947 it was obvious that the regime would not long tolerate Petkov's activities. A press, radio, and parliamentary campaign was organized, and official communiqués blared forth variations on the headline news that "a handful of opposition members, headed by Petkov, are plotting against the people's rule in the Fatherland Front."<sup>22</sup> In June 1947 Petkov and twenty-three members of his party were deprived of their seats in Parliament and were arrested and charged with

conspiring to overthrow the government. The prosecution's witnesses testified that Petkov hoped, after a "revolution," to head a government sponsored by the United States and Britain. Petkov pleaded innocent, stating that he wanted only "to rouse the people to fight the Fatherland Front at the ballot box." His plea had no effect on either the trial or the verdict. The prosecution recommended leniency only for his codefendants whose "confessions" were the basis of charges against him. He was found guilty by the people's court, sentenced to death, and hanged. A servile National Assembly rushed through the enactment of a bill on the Prohibition and Dissolution of the Agrarian Union, including all its sections and committees headed by the late Petkov.

Danubian governments have seldom tried and executed their political leaders in such a summary and arbitrary fashion as in *l'affaire Petkov*. This case touched off a full-fledged propaganda battle. Washington and London protested to the Russian occupation commander in Bulgaria and directly to the Dimitrov government, describing the trial as a "miscarriage of justice." The note of the United States State Department denounced the Bulgarian government for having "shown itself wanting with respect to elementary principles of justice." In Sofia a barrage of official communiqués claimed that the opposition had to be forcibly *reoriented* and that the trial was purely an internal matter. Beyond the atrocity of the execution itself, the Petkov case had considerable significance and a direct effect on Bulgaria's foreign and domestic political development. It immensely lowered the country's international prestige, definitely labeled her as the most intolerant and subservient of the new Soviet satellites, and further helped to antagonize the Western Powers. Internally it removed from the path of the regime the last effective obstacle, the last semblance of opposition, thus opening the way to the next stage in the nation's political transformation: the monolithic, single-party Fatherland Front state.

### ECONOMIC TRENDS

The constitution of 1947 establishes the familiar transitional pattern of a three-sector economy: the means of production belong to the state, to cooperatives, or to private individuals (Article 6). The most significant recent changes have greatly strengthened the economic functions of the state, expressing themselves in the large-scale collectivization of farms and a sweeping nationalization of resources and industrial enterprises. The trend toward centralization and a widening scope of state ownership clearly emerges from official statements. "The industrial-

zation and economic development of the country," remarked the leading Communist daily of Sofia in 1945, "cannot be guaranteed and achieved without the intervention, administration, and control of the state."<sup>23</sup> The two-year plan (1947-1949), still largely in the blueprint stage, outlines the complex administrative measures introducing full collectivization and increased state ownership. The trying reparations problem of Bulgaria slowed down these economic reforms and presented serious difficulties in every phase of economic life. A large percentage of agricultural production and of the current industrial output has gone directly to the Soviet Union, which claimed both as reparations for Bulgaria's share in Hitler's war. These items formed part of an *informal* reparations burden for, according to the official dictate of the Paris Peace Conference, Bulgaria owed no reparations to the Soviet Union, but had to settle by direct payment the claims of Yugoslavia and Greece. In addition to exacting these informal and extralegal reparations, the Soviet Union has established direct ownership of all former German assets, mostly key factories and mines, which have been withdrawn from Bulgarian economy and by their absence have crippled efforts toward a national economic reconstruction.\*

Bulgaria is a land of tightly knit village communities which often take the form of agricultural cooperatives. Each village has its council of elders which allocates community resources, plans the usage of the land, and directs the consumption of the harvest and of stored supplies. Using the cooperative farm as a basis, the agrarian reform law of 1945 provided for a gradual collectivization of agriculture, a breakdown of the traditional pattern, and a change from the cooperation of individual landowners to collective ownership. By the end of 1947, 597 collective farms were established, and with further encouragement—and, the increased use of official propaganda—the government planned to have 800 major collective farms in operation by January 1949. The regime is encouraging the peasants to join the new farms by providing them with capital and technical assistance, and by trying to persuade them that collective farmers prosper more than those working their own land. Because of the arbitrary and compulsory features of this nation-wide drive for collectivization, serious peasant resistance has been reported in several regions of the country.

\* The reparations issue is discussed in Chapter II, in connection with the economic provisions of satellite peace treaties. The problems of economic reconstruction are treated here briefly, for they show a close parallel and strong resemblance to Rumanian and Yugoslav issues which are included under the "Economic Reconstruction" headings of the chapter on Rumania (V), and on Yugoslavia (VI).

The first tentative approach toward nationalization was taken in 1945, when coal and salt mines were taken over by the government. Gradually other natural resources were nationalized and most mines passed under the control and operation of the state. When the new Fatherland Front consolidated its power, the stage was set for a further effort of comprehensive nationalization. In December 1947 two bills were passed by the National Assembly; one nationalized all industrial enterprises and the remaining privately owned mines, while the other provided for the nationalization of all private banks. The bills were described by government spokesmen, in the characteristic phraseology of the "new democracies," as transforming the nation's economic basis and boldly embarking on the road toward socialism.<sup>24</sup> The sweeping regulations of the first act extend state control over buildings, stores, machinery, warehouses, transport, and farms serving industrial enterprises. Cooperatives and handicraft enterprises, as well as printing businesses belonging to political groups or parties, are specifically excluded. Former owners and stockholders are compensated for the most part with state bonds, but no compensation is allowed to Fascists, to those who helped Germany and Italy during the war or persecuted Bulgarian anti-Fascists. As a final round of this all-pervasive process, in January 1948 the Dimitrov cabinet announced a forthcoming measure declaring foreign trade a state monopoly. The one-party state is now conveniently bolstered by the new economic formula of the two-sector state in which the means of production belong primarily to the state, occasionally to cooperatives, but never to private individuals.

#### THE FOREIGN POLICIES OF POSTWAR BULGARIA

The foreign political orientation of Bulgaria reversed itself sharply in recent years. Until the latter part of 1944 the principal motivating force was Bulgaria's almost complete political and economic dependence on the Third Reich, which determined her friendships, alliances, and diplomatic antagonisms. Thanks to persistent German encouragement, Bulgaria's revisionist dreams were kept alive and territorial demands pressed to the point where they isolated her from immediate neighbors, excluded her from a widely endorsed, meaningful Balkan Union, and drove her further into the camp of frustrated, revisionist nations along with Italy, Hungary, and Austria. The prewar trend of this Axis-supported foreign policy openly conflicted with the innate desire and natural inclinations of a majority of the Bulgarian people.

The country's postwar diplomacy brought about a drastic reorien-

tation, inextricably tying foreign affairs to the new military and political power in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union. Since the Russo-Bulgarian armistice of October 1944 terminated military operations, the Fatherland Front government fashioned two major sets of foreign policies. The fundamental principle of this diplomacy is the closest possible friendship with the U.S.S.R., the cornerstone of all Bulgarian political alliances and economic agreements. A second major policy urges friendly relations with other "democratic nations" of Eastern and Central Europe, paving the way for an eventual federation of Balkan and Danubian countries.

The extent of Soviet-Bulgarian relations was largely determined by the continued presence of Soviet occupation troops. Beyond the enforced measures of a full military and political rapprochement, there are inherent traits in the Bulgarian people which originally helped to bring the two nations closely together and linked the destiny of the small country to that of the larger power. In spite of a slight Asiatic blood strain, the Bulgarian people are more fully Slavic than most ethnic groups in the Balkans, and in their religious background and social habits closely approximate the principal features of the Russian people. The basic sympathy of the two peoples was fully expressed by the wartime decision of the Bulgarian government not to send troops against the Soviet Union. Instead, in the last few months of the war, Bulgaria sent her army to fight German forces on the side of the Allies and suffered about 30,000 casualties on the bloody battlefields of Yugoslavia and Hungary. Furthermore, a strong underground resistance movement developed in the country itself during the period of German domination, and the fight against Fascism was encouraged by Communist agents representing a steady and persistent Soviet propaganda machinery. Some of these determining factors strongly influenced the Bulgarian people in favor of a genuine friendship toward the Soviet Union. Most of these favorable tendencies were, however, effectively offset by the ruthlessness of Soviet occupation officials, the violent authoritarianism of the Russian-trained Workers' party elite, and the shameless economic exploitation of the country. The slogan of a close friendship of the two nations thus gradually assumed a hollow and superficial propaganda-meaning. In recent months it had to be officially reinforced by diplomatic protestations and hasty treaty agreements, such as the Soviet-Bulgarian pact of March 1948. The twenty-year treaty of friendship, cooperation, and military defense provides for mutual action in event of aggression "on the part of Germany or any

other state which would be united with Germany directly or in any other form." Foreign Minister Molotov further defined the scope of the pact when stating that it would serve the cause of "strengthening democratic peace and security in Europe," as well as a "*preparation for a rebuff of possible new attempts at imperialist aggression.*"<sup>25\*</sup>

Similar objectives motivated the Bulgarian government in its diplomatic relations with neighboring Danubian governments. In ideological orientation, the present Fatherland Front government was closest to Tito's regime, until the break between Yugoslavia and the Cominform again alienated them. Essentially there is a genuine similarity between the national attitudes of Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. They are both revolutionary governments, both Communist-led, both warmly attached to Soviet Russia, both brutally totalitarian, and both dependent on revolutionary armies. Comprehensive treaties of alliance bind Bulgaria to Albania, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary, all of them prospective participants in an Eastern European federation project which has been temporarily postponed under Soviet pressure, but appears as a distinct long-range possibility.† These political pacts are invariably supplemented by a network of commercial agreements. By the end of 1947 Bulgaria concluded trade agreements with every one of the "new democracies," and with the U.S.S.R., Finland, Eastern Germany, and Austria.

Stimulated by her close cooperation with the Soviet Union, Bulgaria has recently displayed a spirit of extreme aggression toward Greece. The origin of this conflict is centuries old, but the bitter disagreements of the present are a result of World War I and its treaty settlements. Bulgaria has neither forgiven nor forgotten the territorial decision of the Paris Conference of 1919, which deprived her of an outlet to the Aegean Sea and enlarged Greece at Bulgarian expense, forcing the latter to withdraw into a narrow geographic area hemmed in by the twin obstacles of the Danube and the Rhodope Mountains. The interwar period was marked by a continuous series of border incidents between the two countries, and the postwar instability of Greece further accentuated this hostility. The Bulgarian government actively encouraged the insurgent Greek forces of General Markos, opened the border and gave them access to Bulgarian territory, supplied the guerrilla troupes with food, shelter, and volunteers, and freely expressed

\* Italics mine.

† For a detailed discussion of Danubian treaty alliances and federation projects, cf. Chapter VIII.

its political stand against the official Greek government. The Fatherland Front Congress of February 1948 declared its "sincere friendship with democratic Greece, fighting for its national independence."

A similar brand of unsettling, hostile foreign policy characterizes postwar diplomatic relations with Turkey. The violation of Bulgarian sovereignty by flights of Turkish military aircraft in 1948 touched off a dangerously exaggerated press and propaganda campaign which, by customary Balkan standards, could easily have led to a serious international conflict. The Fatherland Front government resented repeated statements in the Turkish press describing Bulgaria as "this old Turkish Danubian province." The Bulgarian official press retaliated by its own barrage, referring to Turkey as the "would-be slave-owner of the Danubian provinces of a *former* Ottoman Empire,"<sup>26</sup> and as the enemy preparing further provocations against the republic. The serious disagreement of the two governments is an obvious and meaningful symptom of the deepening cleavage now separating the Eastern and Western bloc of nations. Bulgaria, southeasternmost of all Danubian satellites of the Soviet Union, directly opposes Greece and Turkey, whose ideological and political resistance is strongly bolstered by the continued and energetic support of the United States. At this juncture the regional problems of Danubia are overshadowed by the global issues of Soviet-American relations.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER VII

1. Bulgaria's case against Greece is particularly bitter and violent in connection with the Aegean seacoast. As tersely stated by a Bulgarian writer, "Although the Greeks have possession of this sea at present, the Bulgarians lived with it for centuries past. They planted their culture in all the lands around the sea . . . ." Cf. Liuben Bojkoff, *Bulgaria Is Not the Land of Roses Only* (Sofia, 1946), p. 11 *et seq.*
2. G. C. Logio, *Bulgaria, Past and Present* (Manchester, 1936), pp. 452-453.
3. The Entente was the exact opposite of democratic government although visiting Westerners were often deceived by official communiqués and misleading statements. Cf. E. Herriot, *Eastward from Paris* (London, 1934), pp. 35-36.
4. C. E. Black, *The Establishment of Constitutional Government in Bulgaria* (Princeton, 1943), p. 113.
5. Martin Ebon, *World Communism Today* (New York, 1948), p. 106.
6. Grigore Gafencu, *Last Days of Europe* (New Haven, 1948), p. 92.

7. The Fatherland Front, at its best, was a superficial combination of three political parties and several odds and ends split off from larger political groupings, "somewhat as the tail of a lizard splits off from the body without doing it any noticeable injury." There were a few Social Democrats in the FF, a few Radicals, an Independent or so, but none of these seemed to have any discoverable principle unless the desire for power be counted as one. Cf. R. H. Markham's report on Bulgaria in *The New Leader*, Dec. 21, 1946, pp. 4-5.
8. N. Petrov, "Bulgaria Tries Again," *The Central European Observer*, March 29, 1946, pp. 103-104.
9. Quoted by N. Petrov, *ibid.*, and discussed in more detail by Dimitrov himself in his article "Communists, Agrarians and Zveno," *Free Bulgaria*, Feb. 1, 1948, p. 36.
10. R. H. Markham, *Tito's Imperial Communism* (Chapel Hill, 1947), pp. 208-209.
11. C. E. Black, "The Axis Satellites and the Great Powers," *Foreign Policy Reports*, May 1, 1946, pp. 42-43.
12. On the whole, a large proportion of the peacetime contingent of army officers was purged, several hundred having been liquidated in the process. Only a relatively small number of regular officers have remained in the army—those who have consented to serve the Soviet setup. Many active antifascist officers in the army were either removed or liquidated. Among them was General Cyril Stanchev, who was sentenced to death by the royal-fascist regime (1935) and who actually organized the action of September 9, 1944, which brought the main victories against the Germans. Because he refused the part of a communist tool and Soviet agent, he was arrested and tried for "treason." Cf. "Bulgarian Chiefs Periled by Purge," *The New York Times*, Aug. 14, 1946, and for further details, "Volksrepublik Bulgarien," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Sept. 11, 1946, p. 1.
13. American protests were based on the Moscow Agreement of the Big Three. They were directed against the "unfair" parliamentary elections of November 1945 in which the Chamber was chosen by means of a single list of candidates and without an even nominal participation of the opposition. "It is the United States Government's interpretation of the Moscow decision," stated one of the several American notes, "that the Bulgarian Government and opposition should be urged to find a mutually acceptable basis for the participation in the present Bulgarian government of . . . truly representative members of the opposition parties." Cf. *U. S. Department of State Bulletin*, March 17, 1946, p. 447.
14. "Bulgarian Elections," *The Economist*, Nov. 2, 1946. The 364 parliamentary seats of the Fatherland Front were divided in the following proportion:



|                  |     |
|------------------|-----|
| Communists       | 277 |
| Agrarians        | 69  |
| Social Democrats | 9   |
| Zveno            | 8   |
| Radicals         | 1   |

15. "The People's Councils, Foundation of the Fatherland Front Administration," *Zemедельско Zname* (official paper of the new, pro-Communist Agrarian Union), Feb. 1948. The Yugoslav constitution also provides for organs of state administration, but its *people's committees* are not as elaborate or powerful as their Bulgarian counterpart. Their geographic organization follows the same regional principle: "The people's committees are the organs of state authority in localities [villages, small towns], districts, townwards, towns, departments and regions," states Article 107 of the Yugoslav constitution.
16. Georgi Dimitrov, "1947 Balance Sheet," *Free Bulgaria*, Jan. 15, 1948, p. 19.
17. Quoted in *East Europe*, Nov. 6, 1947, p. 5.
18. E. P. Young, "Bulgarian Revolution," *The Central European Observer*, Feb. 20, 1948, p. 33.
19. The Permanent Bureau of the Fatherland Front has not displaced or eliminated the previously existing and fully crystallized agencies of the Communist party itself. Recently reorganized, the party still has a Central Communist Bureau (74 members) of its own, and a higher-level Central Committee (9 members). The latter is the executive and policy-formulating organ of the party, the inner circle of the most trusted leaders. Georgi Dimitrov is chairman of both bureau and committee, thus performing the role of a one-man liaison agency between party and "coalition" government.
20. Reported in *East Europe*, Sept. 4, 1947.
21. *Druzba*, No. 13, Feb. 2, 1947. Quoted by Dr. G. M. Dimitrov in his summary on *Soviet Interference in Bulgaria* (Washington, 1947).
22. Quoted in *East Europe*, June 18, 1947.
23. Official Communist party statement in *Rabotnichesko Delo*, Oct. 4, 1945.
24. "Peaceful Revolution," *Free Bulgaria*, Jan. 1, 1948, p. 1.
25. "Soviet-Bulgaria Mutual Defense Pact Is Signed," *The New York Times*, March 19, 1948.
26. "Who Blocks Peace in the Balkans?" *Free Bulgaria*, March 1, 1948, pp. 75-76.

## VIII • Alliances and Federation Projects in Danubian Europe

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The deep ideological rift between East and West intensified the urgency for federation in Europe and projected several possible solutions into the world political picture. The most recent projects concerning the political redivision of Europe usually extend through Western Europe, but deal separately with a large sector of the Continent, frequently excluding most of Eastern and Central Europe. Winston Churchill's "United States of Europe" is based on a federative nucleus of such typically Western states as France, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, and the Scandinavian countries. This Western bloc faces a regional group of similar dimensions, on the pattern of a "United States of Eastern Europe" composed of the Soviet Union, Finland, Poland, the Soviet Zone of Germany, and the Danubian states. The significance of a Danubian or Balkan federation is evident in the light of this inevitable and basic division in the organizational structure of Europe. It would effectively serve as a shock absorber for either side and, were it able to remain free of encroachments by the Great Powers, it would in the long run unite rather than split the peoples of Europe. President Benes of Czechoslovakia expressed this thought in 1947 when stating that "culturally we are Europeans. We shall never ally ourselves exclusively with the East or exclusively with the West but will always attempt to do so both with East and West."<sup>1</sup>

These federative plans have one particularly dangerous aspect. If present-day considerations prevail, one half of Europe's territory and not less than 220 million of its population are set in some opposition to the other half. This figure combines the population of the smaller countries of Eastern-Central Europe, approximately 90 million, with the number of inhabitants in European Russia and its population of about

130 million. From a broader European point of view, the need for a central buffer zone, a belt of federated small states, seems immediate and compelling. A definite trend toward effective federalization expressed itself in the recent development of certain alliance systems, economic and military understandings, based on a rapprochement between Central-Eastern European nations. Yet these tight alliances were apt to create small and exclusive "orbits" of two or three nations nurturing their own complex of regional interests, their own spheres of influence. A major complication occurred when these small nations decided to turn against each other in a struggle over their divergent and localized interests, preventing the formation of a united front against devastating outside pressures. Thus the Danubian region always oscillated between the tendency to divide into fragmentary national units, and an impulse to unite in some common political organization.

The most serious handicap facing federations was undoubtedly the actual or threatened domination by neighboring large powers. In the past decade Nazi-German conquest frustrated all attempts at an effective and fairly independent federation in this area. Today we find that an even more aggressive blueprint of domination and exploitation is being carried out in the heart of Central Europe, a campaign which has succeeded in transforming this region into a closed economic and political system, working in rhythm with Soviet methods and developments. A Soviet-sponsored Danubian or Balkan Federation could never serve as a bridge between East and West, but would split Europe even further by closing off additional large sectors of the Continent from all Western, particularly from all British and American, influences.

In his *Mitteleuropa* (1915), Friedrich Naumann offered one of the strongest expressions of a Danubian bloc-concept. Naumann advocated a politically unified Central Europe held together by the added bond of a customs union; eventually, he claimed, a German sphere of influence would develop. Naumann and his numerous followers also proclaimed the popular idea that there was no future for small- or even moderate-sized powers. "Our conceptions of size have entirely changed. Only very large states have any significance on their own account, all the smaller ones must live by utilizing the quarrels of the great, or must obtain leave if they wish to do anything unusual."<sup>2</sup> Although Naumann's ideas produced no tangible results during World War I, they obviously influenced subsequent plans and alliance systems in Danubian Europe. Renewed possibilities of an economic union were dis-

cussed after the war, and several Central European governments voiced their opinion that new regional arrangements were needed in order to bring about closer economic relations. Austria in particular favored the formation of a Danubian economic union. Under Austrian auspices a Central European economic conference was held in Vienna in 1925. Establishment of a permanent Danubian economic commission was proposed, and a final resolution was passed to this effect: "The Economic Conference considers as one of the principal evils of the Central European situation the continuing isolation of the economic systems of small states."<sup>3</sup>

The serious economic problems of prewar Austria led to direct bilateral negotiations with surrounding stronger countries. The result of German-Austrian economic discussions fell upon Central Europe like a bombshell. In the Austro-German customs union project, announced in March 1931, the two countries represented their agreement as paving the way for a broad European Union, and declared that it was open to the adherence of other nations. The idea of a tightly knit Austro-German economic union was forcefully opposed by France, Italy, and Czechoslovakia, which took the view that this was the first step toward a revision of the peace treaties and a drastic modification of the Versailles *status quo*. It was feared that the customs union would lead to a political union, with the result that Germany would dominate Eastern Europe both economically and politically.<sup>4</sup> The matter was referred to the World Court, but even before its negative decision upholding the Franco-Italian contention, both Germany and Austria announced the abandonment of the proposed customs union. Political rather than economic motivations predetermined the failure of this project, which might have strengthened the shaky foundations of post-war Central Europe.

The plan for a customs union elicited a significant further reaction from France in the form of the first Western European proposal of a full-fledged Danubian Union. In March 1932 French Prime Minister André Tardieu officially called upon the representatives of Austria, Hungary, and the Little Entente (Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia), urging them to form a Danubian Union. Promising the support of France, Great Britain, and Italy, Tardieu suggested a system of preferential agreements and import quotas as the first step in reconstructing the economic unity of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. A further objective was the revival of trade between the newly established Danubian states, freeing it of the perennial obstacles of high

tariffs and drastic currency restrictions. Tardieu's willingness to include Austria and Hungary in the proposed union constituted an interesting departure from previous French foreign policy, which centered primarily around members of the Little Entente. The gesture of friendliness toward these two countries expressed an obvious French concern with Germany's increasing political role and economic predominance in the Danube Valley. In an effort to forestall the menacing progress of a German *Drang nach Osten*, such diplomatic countermoves were deemed essential by Western statesmen of the early thirties.

Despite the bid for Austro-Hungarian support, the Tardieu plan met with little enthusiasm in Danubian countries. The three agrarian states, Hungary, Rumania, and Yugoslavia, welcomed the suggestion of French loans or credits, but refused to lower tariff duties on each other's agricultural products. They agreed, moreover, that Germany offered a much more satisfactory market for their surplus foodstuffs than did Austria and Czechoslovakia, which imported relatively little grain. Austria feared the effects of Czech competition under a Danubian preferential agreement. Even Czechoslovakia, generally labeled as France's mainstay in Geneva, found small comfort in the prospect of a Danubian Union, since its chief exports were not channeled toward Southeastern Europe, but toward Germany and Great Britain. The plan itself was shattered by the firm opposition of Germany and Italy. Neither country was anxious to see the crystallization of a new "Danubian order" in which it would be relegated to the role of outside observer. Mussolini's government was particularly opposed to the formation of a Danubian Federation under French auspices. The Italian cabinet emphatically declared that the conflict of interests in Eastern Europe made a general accord impracticable, and, in an effort to relieve the economic plight of Austria and Hungary, urged the conclusion of bilateral agreements between industrial and agricultural states of this region.<sup>5</sup> The failure of further negotiations revealed once more the sharp divergence of opinion regarding the solution of Danubian economic problems. The collapse of the Austro-German customs union and the Tardieu plan spelled the end of *regional* alliance- and federation-projects for a period of several years.\* They did not fully reappear on the scene until the last stages of World War II, when

\* More compact and smaller alliance groups, such as the Little Entente and Rome Protocol countries, continued their vigorous development throughout the nineteen thirties. They represent primarily the influence of outside powers and cannot be considered native nuclei for federation. They are discussed in Chapter I, pages 16-20.

political blueprints for the future began to emerge, gradually displacing the intensive processes of wartime strategic planning.

### WARTIME AND POSTWAR ALLIANCES IN CENTRAL-EASTERN EUROPE

The fall of Nazi Germany created political chaos in Europe, prolonging the Continent's crisis and intensifying the decay of existing governmental systems. The task of defeating the Third Reich seemed immense, but the rebuilding of Danubian Europe amidst the ruins of Germany was not any less formidable. Among major political forces which have appeared since the end of military operations, a number of new alliance systems are particularly significant in setting the course of postwar politics. Some of the alliances bind Danubian countries to outside nations, such as the Czech-Soviet, Soviet-Yugoslav, and British-Hungarian agreements, but the majority are based on new lines of rapprochement within the Danubian area, and could effectively serve as foundations for long-range federation projects. Most of these alliance systems have been actively supported by a newcomer to the Danube Valley, the U.S.S.R., which has repeatedly stressed as one of her major foreign political objectives the development of a bloc of friendly governments in Eastern Europe. This energetic Soviet support accounted for the forced exuberance of recent Danubian interviews and press communiqués, the seemingly sincere fervor with which Communist politicians, all members of the nine-nation Information Bureau, advocated the cause of immediate federalization. Their skin-deep ideological enthusiasm did not always succeed in concealing ancient animosities, intense nationalist ferments, and disturbing racial conflicts, which revived inevitably as soon as Soviet pressure abated. The presence of a more or less silent third partner was responsible for a consistent aggressiveness in the resolutions of the new Cominform, and for a strange similarity in the provisions of recent Danubian treaty alliances.

#### CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND POLAND

The postwar rapprochement of Czechoslovakia and Poland presents an obvious contrast to the pre-Munich situation. Between the two wars Polish-Czech relations were, on the whole, coldly correct. In the early 1930's, under the dictatorial Pilsudski regime in Poland, differences between the two states were strongly accentuated, and all attempts to create fairly intimate diplomatic relations were abandoned. The horrors of German occupation and the mutually shared problems of

governments in exile brought the two countries together for the first time in their recent history. The Czechoslovak-Polish pact, announced in November 1940, served as a spearhead to recent efforts toward federalization. This joint declaration by the two exiled governments centered around three major sets of provisions. First, the pact included guarantees of the democratic character of the two countries' future internal regimes, by specifically defining and guaranteeing certain civil rights such as personal freedom, freedom of learning and of association, and equality before the law. General provisions were also made to develop governmental "organs of confederation," certain joint political institutions necessary to implement at some future date the plan for a Czechoslovak-Polish Confederation.<sup>6</sup>

The third point of this preliminary agreement involved the most significant promise for future political development, the possibility of participation by other states in the nucleus of a Czechoslovak-Polish Confederation. An extensive regional understanding was foreshadowed by this statement: "The two governments desire that the Polish-Czechoslovak Confederation should embrace *other states of the European area with which the vital interests of Poland and Czechoslovakia are linked*."<sup>\*</sup> This statement was intended to encourage a political, economic, and military association among the Danubian participants. A subsequent Czech-Polish agreement, dated January 1942, repeated as its principal provision the invitation to participate in the original confederation of Poland and Czechoslovakia. These agreements had several obvious drawbacks. They incorporated only a general body of principles instead of detailed and elaborate constitutional provisions, and left three important technical questions unanswered. Will the confederation agreement create common citizenship for nationals of the participating countries? Will it assure a common conduct of national defense in peace and wartime? Will the national parliaments involved work jointly or separately? Nevertheless, the Czech-Polish understanding is notable for paving the way toward wartime cooperation among the governments of Eastern Europe.

The most outstanding development along this line was the foundation of a Central and Eastern European Planning Board called into being by the governments in exile of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Greece. This research agency first emerged at the International Labor Conference held in Washington in 1942, and was particularly active between 1942 and 1944. One of its basic objectives was

\* Italics mine.

the careful organization of postwar relief work, motivated by the hope that the speedy delivery of food supplies, medicines, and necessary raw materials would put the war-torn Eastern European economies to work. Another objective was to promote regional reconstruction "in the proper sense," by stabilizing inflated currencies, facilitating large-scale land reforms, and rebuilding demolished industrial plants.<sup>7</sup> Unhappily these far-reaching reforms, so essential to the reorganization of Danubian economic and social structure, did not proceed beyond the blueprint stage.

Throughout the war both the Central and Eastern European Planning Board and the London governments in exile tirelessly proclaimed the opinion that a Central European Federation should grow out of the original Czech-Polish declarations. They were convinced that the Czech-Polish agreement could easily be extended to include at least Hungary, Austria, and Rumania, eventually joining forces with a Balkan Federation based on the small states of both Eastern and South-eastern Europe. The Czech-Polish Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance, signed in Warsaw in March 1947, is a distinctive postwar development. Instead of emphasizing the federative idea, it stresses a Slavic alliance against potential German aggression. The treaty's Preamble describes the *military security* aspect of the alliance in no uncertain terms. The contracting governments are endeavoring "to ensure the peaceful development of these two Slav countries which border directly on Germany and which in the course of all their history have been the object of German aggression, as a result of which their very existence was more than once threatened." They have "taken to heart the experiences of the recent war which brought the two nations face to face with mortal danger. They realize the vital interest of their two countries in a joint defense . . . and they are convinced that a joint defense against such a danger is in the interests of the maintenance of international security." Close collaboration and friendship of the two governments is defined as vital in promoting their cultural and economic development and strengthening their treaty of mutual aid. The plan for economic cooperation is generally considered the most important aspect of the treaties signed by Poland and Czechoslovakia.<sup>8</sup> Under it a council including five members of each nation is set up. In the long-term program, Czechoslovakia promised to export heavy-industrial products and machinery for equipping Poland's factories and harbors, while Poland would supply coal needed for the Czech five-year plan.

Czech-Polish projects were, in general, favorably received by the



governments of Danubian Europe. Slavic and non-Slavic diplomats expressed the hope that other alliance systems would agree to coordinate their efforts with those of Prague and Warsaw. Notable exceptions were recent statements by Karl Gruber, foreign minister of Austria who, in a series of parliamentary addresses and press conferences, unequivocally set the course of his government. Gruber firmly opposed a compact among Danubian countries bringing strongly armed nations into close contact with almost disarmed countries, and relatively free economies in competition with completely nationalized systems. Some Danubian states, he remarked, have satisfactory alliances; others do not. While Austria should certainly be integrated into a peaceful European order, only the United Nations can provide for such integration and for mutual security among the countries of Central-Eastern Europe. In summary, Gruber stated that "*strength for the new order in this part of Europe will not come from alliances between Austria and neighboring states.*" The necessary strength must be found in the United Nations."\*\*

#### RUMANIA AND HUNGARY

Progress toward international reconciliation has been exhibited in the surprising rapprochement between Rumania and Hungary. Since World War I relations between these two countries have been poisoned by incessant territorial debates over the question of Transylvania. In the interwar period bitter accusations were exchanged between the two governments concerning the treatment of their national residents in Transylvania. They constantly accused each other of deliberately falsifying the ethnic statistics of this area in order to justify suppressive moves of all types. Hungarian authorities maintained, for example, that the last official Rumanian census in Transylvania, according to which 58 per cent of the population was Rumanian and 26.7 per cent Hungarian, was untenable and did not correspond to actual facts. Hungarians claimed that there was an even division of the people between the two dominant nationalities, and thus there should also be an even territorial division of Transylvania proper between Hungary and Rumania. The mixed ethnic composition of the population frustrated all attempts at efficient national administration, and the hostility of the two prewar regimes contributed substantially to the irresistible sweep of Nazi arms and diplomacy. In 1940 the Vienna Award returned about half of Transylvania to Hungary, but in 1944 the armistice signed between the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and Ru-

\* Italics mine.

mania declared the Vienna Award null and void. In March 1945, with Soviet support, Petru Groza became Rumania's prime minister. In order to bolster up this government, Rumanian administration was re-established by the Soviet Union in most of Transylvania. The first step toward reconciliation occurred when the new Groza government announced that the rights of all national minorities of Transylvania would be guaranteed. Groza apparently was sincere in his view that Transylvania should serve as the home of both Hungarians and Rumanians, who must live together in friendship; he therefore has sought to handle the affairs of the Transylvanian Hungarians with less aggressiveness than had any previous Rumanian administration.<sup>10</sup> In 1947 the Groza government brought up the plan of a Rumanian-Hungarian customs Union. As a means of eliminating the recurrent nationalistic persecutions on both sides of the border, Hungary's postwar coalition government received the plan with enthusiasm. In a characteristic propaganda interview with Premier Groza, the official Hungarian newspaper *Uj Élet* stated that both governments were now striving for a customs union, and also intended to fight the compulsory passport and travel permit system. Groza declared that there was complete harmony between Hungarians and Rumanians.<sup>11</sup>

The fiasco of the Moscow Conference and the announcement of the Marshall Plan further accelerated the process of forming a nucleus for a Danubian alliance system under the instigation and sponsorship of the Soviet Union. In May 1947 Groza visited Budapest with the express purpose of asking for an immediate customs union and *ultimate* confederation of the two countries. On this trip to Hungary, the first in decades by a high Rumanian official, four key Communist members of his cabinet undertook important confidential negotiations with equivalent members of the Hungarian government. In view of an impending customs union and the coordination of national three-year plans recently announced in each country, discussions between the ministers of finance and the ministers of industrial reconstruction gain added significance. According to several Budapest dailies, Groza's visit meant a spectacular success for Hungary's new democracy. Groza himself claimed to have succeeded in integrating the rapprochement of the two countries with the broader framework of a projected Danubian federation. "We have reached the point," he belligerently stated, "where a complete break with the past is both necessary and inevitable. The more effectively we eliminate from our own peoples' psychological attitudes the differences of the past, the closer we shall get to our main

objective . . . . *With us and for us are the freedom-loving peoples of the world, and particularly our all-powerful neighbor to the East, the Soviet Union.*" <sup>12</sup> \*

Both the Hungarian and the Rumanian press showed systematic perseverance in paving the way for this unexpected postwar harmony, transforming earlier national animosities into a sudden, and suspiciously artificial, friendship. The propaganda campaign clearly reflected an emphasis on the newly acquired community of ideological interests. Accordingly, it stressed the common political and national destinies of the postwar era as the compelling force which caused these two countries to cooperate closely, first in terms of a customs union, and eventually within a broader Danubian Federation. Thus following the dictates of Soviet policy makers, Hungary and Rumania have entered the uncharted road leading toward economic, political, and ideological collaboration between their Communist-controlled governments.

#### HUNGARY AND YUGOSLAVIA

Under obvious Communist encouragement, Hungary and Yugoslavia have recently resumed diplomatic and commercial relations. Prior to the Balkan phase of World War II, in December 1940, the two countries concluded a treaty of "eternal friendship" and mutual military assistance. The flagrant Hungarian violation of this treaty obligation, only a few months after its solemn ratification, generated immense bitterness in Yugoslavia, which rightfully felt betrayed by her immediate neighbor on the eve of military invasion by Hitler's army. A drastically altered postwar political atmosphere and the omnivorous ambition of Yugoslav and Hungarian Communist leaders brought the two countries together in a mutual understanding of their new "orbitation" relationship. In December 1946 diplomatic relations were formally resumed and speedily implemented by a comprehensive five-year trade treaty. The treaty itself was signed in Belgrade as the result of secret negotiations between Marshal Tito and then Vice Premier Kardelj for Yugoslavia, and Minister of Industries Antal Bán for Hungary. Under the new agreement Yugoslavia will provide iron ore, copper, lead, and lumber for Hungarian industry and reconstruction, while Hungary in return will deliver manufactured goods; such as agricultural machinery and transportation equipment.

This recent phase of enforced cordiality was further strengthened by a personal visit of then Prime Minister Nagy to Marshal Tito shortly after the treaty had been put in operation. The highly publicized aim

\* Italics mine.

of this official trip was to correlate Yugoslavia's newly announced national five-year plan with the Hungarian three-year project and to establish closer political ties between the two countries. The restoration of heavily damaged transportation systems and a more complete integration of the two economies were on the agenda of a four-minister meeting held in Budapest in May 1947. Communiqués and editorials voiced an elation similar in its uniform intensity to the reactions which greeted the Hungarian-Rumanian rapprochement. In addition to economic negotiations, plans for further close collaboration between the two countries were perfected. Shortly after the announcement of the Belgrade Information Bureau, the Yugoslav and Hungarian governments issued a far-reaching statement to the effect that agreements on mutual aid and friendship were soon to be concluded between them. The agreements of December 1947 were broad enough to comprise both a cultural convention and a full-fledged military assistance pact. The true meaning of the pact appeared in its third paragraph, which formulated the political principle linking the new Danubian defense chain: "If Germany or any other country should attack one or the other of the contracting parties, the other party will come to the aid of the attacked without delay and with all her military powers."

#### YUGOSLAVIA AND RUMANIA

The present treaty alliance of Rumania and Yugoslavia involves a partial restoration of the Little Entente formed after World War I, an alliance in which these countries were energetic members and exponents. Its re-establishment was motivated by a set of new political forces. The prewar treaties were aimed primarily at revisionist Hungary and aspired to maintain a rigid Central European *status quo* which was balanced around two dominant power groups. One of these was the Little Entente, which included the newly created states of Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia.\* The other was the Rome Protocol group in which Italy made strenuous and persistent efforts to keep the friendship of Austria and Hungary. The Rome Protocols, officially announced in March 1934, constituted the three signatories' first concrete reaction to the successful development of the Little Entente. Today

\* Greece was closely affiliated with the three Little Entente states and oriented her own policy along similar lines. The climax of a Yugoslav-Greek rapprochement occurred on January 15, 1942, when a comprehensive federation project and alliance pact was signed by the two governments in exile in London. Tito's emergence abruptly terminated this era of good-will. Today Greece and Yugoslavia are bitter enemies, separated by a wide ideological gulf.

Soviet Russia is the source of pressure, and the principal motive is the formation of a Communist-dominated Danubian orbit turned aggressively toward the West.

The Rumanian-Yugoslav alliance system was one of the decisive moves preparatory to the establishment of a broad Danubian Union. As stated by one of Rumania's ex-foreign ministers and former League of Nations representatives, Grigore Gafencu, "the Danube belongs to the Danubians, and . . . it can also be said that the Danube and the Danubians no longer belong to Europe." It is their mission, he claimed, "not to serve as instruments against Russia, but on the contrary to be a means of establishing peace and conciliation between Western and Central Europe, and the Empire of the East."<sup>13</sup> To implement these general objectives and to develop a tight regional bloc in Danubian Europe, Rumanian Prime Minister Groza spent several days in the summer of 1947 visiting Marshal Tito in Belgrade. Their new treaty was officially announced in December 1947, after Tito's visit to Bucharest. Groza and Tito jointly stated that they desired to create full political, cultural, and economic cooperation in order to "contribute to the maintenance of peace."\* Beyond the twenty-year treaty of friendship and cooperation, agreements were reached on a revision of the Danubian navigation system, on the text of a cultural convention, and on a system of mutual military assistance. It was also decided to set up a commission to create closer economic cooperation and to elaborate a detailed program for the achievement of further political objectives.

#### OTHER REGIONAL UNDERSTANDINGS AND MOVEMENTS FOR BALKAN UNITY

In July 1947, in an effort to crystallize a new alliance, five top leaders of the Rumanian government left Bucharest for Sofia. Their conferences were intended to strengthen Balkan cooperation "against the attempt of the reactionaries to infringe upon the independence and national sovereignty of the democratic parties in this part of Europe."<sup>14</sup> Under Groza's leadership the Rumanian delegation discussed political and economic problems and a mutual-assistance pact. Official communiqués announced that the two governments agreed to settle "all outstanding questions, including the development of trade relations," to conclude a cultural agreement, and to cooperate in questions of

\* As it is of historic significance in setting the postwar pattern of Danubian treaties, this pact is reproduced in full in the Appendix, pages 316-318.

Danubian navigation. In addition to problems of cooperation within the Soviet sphere, Rumanian officials also raised the last outstanding territorial issue of this area, compensation to Rumanians for large-scale holdings in southern Dobruja. This area was taken from Rumania during World War II, and Bulgaria was permitted to retain it by the recent satellite peace treaty. Under steady Soviet pressure this territorial conflict was settled in a submissive spirit of forced friendliness.

Tito's plan for a Yugoslav-Bulgarian Union was one of the first post-war attempts at federalization in the Danubian area. In November 1944 a Bulgarian delegation spent several weeks in Belgrade discussing the economic aspects of this alliance. In the initial stage of negotiations the plan involved a joint stabilization of monetary units, a joint customs organization, and the coordination of commerce and industry between the two countries. The second round of negotiations again took place in Belgrade, where Dimitrov and Bulgarian Foreign Minister Georgiev arrived in July 1947 for the most publicized meetings of the entire series of recent Danubian consultations. In August the signing of an eight-point treaty was announced, undoubtedly the most comprehensive agreement between any pair of Balkan states, with the possible exception of Yugoslavia and Albania. The degree of association between Tito's government and the Bulgarians was particularly remarkable in view of the long-standing and determined hostility between two countries which have fought four wars in seventy years.

According to the text of the treaty, published immediately after the conclusion of the conferences, Article 1 called for a subsequent treaty of "friendship, cooperation, and mutual aid"; Article 2, for economic cooperation, including a fixed rate of exchange, the preparation of a customs union, and the coordination of economic measures covering electric power, mining, agriculture, transport, and foreign trade. Article 3 provided for the abolition of visas and the joint administration of property adjoining the Yugoslav-Bulgarian frontier, while Article 4 set up the administrative machinery for the extension of railroad and highway communications between the two countries. Article 6 described a close cultural cooperation and press exchanges, and under Article 7 Yugoslavia unilaterally renounced the \$25,000,000 still outstanding on the Bulgarian reparations account. Article 5, actually the cardinal clause of the treaty, refers to *close political relations* between the two governments, in the face of "frequent frontier provocations by the Greek government," and in connection with the UN Balkan subcommission and "its hitherto biased activities." The clause also reiterates the sig-

natories' endeavor to form a community of interests with regard to all important regional and international questions including, for example, the political status of the Danube River. The first authoritative interpretation of the new treaty came from Dimitrov, who described its underlying motif in a Sofia speech as cooperation between the Slav countries, having as its object the "defense against every possible unprovoked attack directed against their freedom, independence, and territorial integrity."<sup>15</sup> In a more cautious vein, Dimitrov also added that the time (August 1947) was not yet ripe for a Southeastern European or Danubian Federation. In spite of such qualifying afterthoughts, there can be little doubt that the federation movement was greatly strengthened by the Yugoslav-Bulgarian pact.

A series of agreements between Yugoslavia and Albania was announced in 1946 and 1947. The first of these, signed in December 1946, concerned the joint economic development of the two countries and put Yugoslavia in much the same position as Italy had occupied in Albania before the war. Under the provisions of this agreement, Yugoslavia would contribute money and equipment to Albania in exchange for raw materials. Yugoslav credits would be used to purchase machinery and machine tools, to create industries in Albania, and to improve its agriculture. In addition, currencies between the two countries would be equalized through the development of a single monetary system; a common tariff and customs territory would be created and jointly administered by a Yugoslav-Albanian commission. In order to "intensify and increase the production of Albania, and to reinforce economic collaboration between Albania and Yugoslavia," states the key provision of the treaty, the two governments have decided to organize certain *mixed* companies. Accordingly a new Albanian-Yugoslav State Planning Agency, a central bank, and companies for the management of railroads, the manufacture of naphtha, mines and metals, electrification, shipping, and export and import were announced soon after the treaty's ratification.<sup>16</sup> The duration of these agreements was set at thirty years from the date of the signing of the treaty. The spirit of enthusiasm was not confined to the two signatories. Using their characteristic propaganda terminology to express their vital interest in furthering Slavic cooperation, Bulgarian authorities hailed this agreement as "unique in the history of diplomacy and in the relations between two countries. While agents of international trusts try to sow discord among the peoples in order to separate and plunder them, the new republics of Albania and Yugoslavia are removing barriers be-

tween the two countries and working for the mutual well-being of the two peoples."<sup>17</sup> Prior to the break between Tito and the Cominform, Albania was a protectorate, a semiautonomous region within the newly created federal system of Yugoslavia, with its economy geared to that of the larger unit. After the rift of June 1948 Albania denounced the new orientation of Tito's regime and aligned itself on the side of the Cominform, thus following the most recent, anti-Yugoslav dictates of Soviet foreign policy.

### ANTI-WESTERN TRENDS AND THE IMPACT OF SOVIET POLICIES

The survey of alliances and regional understandings in Danubian Europe should be carefully balanced by a review of the principal points of friction and conflict. With the emergence of the Soviet Union as the dominant power in Eastern Europe the intensity of anti-Western feelings increased perceptibly. Anti-Western propaganda campaigns are actually more than a series of practical complaints. As Hugh Seton-Watson observes this is, "an ideological holy war of words. Britain in particular is denounced as a cruel, oppressive, war-mongering and reactionary power. Absolutely no credit is given to social reform in Britain or to the changes of British policy."<sup>18</sup> The campaign is principally directed against the United States and Great Britain, its weapons ranging from a fairly complete blackout of information to sharp diplomatic notes criticizing and denouncing American and British policies. Each new step of deterioration in the relations between Moscow and Washington is immediately mirrored in the local communities of these countries, where frictions intensify and relations grow more tense between the precariously balanced groups of Left, Center, and Right. Hate is most determined and bitter in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, whose aggressive propaganda machines are employed to represent Western nations as the slave drivers of Europe and as the most dangerous reactionary and imperialist powers of the world. Danubian politicians usually refer to Western democracy as an attractive, appealing, but entirely ineffective system of government which may champion the rights of individuals but never those of the working masses. "Peasant democracies of the East will have to be vastly different from the rigid and capitalistic democracies of the West," they postulate.

The same line of psychological and propaganda warfare was taken up recently by Hungary and Rumania, which had previously been more hesitant about turning openly against the Western Powers. Russian occupation officials have increasingly used their authority to



enforce a drastic embargo on news from the outside world, presenting, instead, their own version of Western diplomatic moves and policies. Yielding to Communist dictation, Rumania's press and public opinion have paid scant attention to American help given in 1946 and 1947 in the form of food relief and shipments of surplus goods. Instead, there have been numerous direct attacks against the imperialist West. The Rumanian government, according to its communiqués, has to depend strongly on assistance from abroad. Obviously, official hopes are now centered on Moscow, and frequently recurring statements assert that all aid, political and economic, must come from the East with a simultaneous reduction of existing connections with the belligerent West. The deep split between East and West has proven disastrous for Danubian Europe, whose strategic and economic frontiers have again been entangled in the overwhelming struggle between empires. The center of power may have shifted, the political techniques of infiltration and domination may have been modified to suit the dictates of a new age, but the dominant problem of this European conflict zone has not really changed since 1918. Realistically summarized by Professor Mitrany, the essence of this problem is still the negative fact that "the Danubian region has not had the good fortune to be protected by a Monroe Doctrine of its own."<sup>19</sup>

The national policies of Danubian Europe are determined, for the greater part, by Soviet strategic and ideological aims. Through the incorporation of Carpathian Ruthenia into the Ukrainian S.S.R., the Soviet Union is now part of Central Europe and can therefore exert more direct pressure. Until recently Russia expressed its reserve toward the formation of large federative complexes in this area, feeling that they might easily develop into prewar types of *cordons sanitaires* isolating the Soviet from the rest of Europe. For several decades Russia has endeavored to extend her influence and rule over the nations of Eastern and Southeastern Europe by the creation of a huge Slavic bloc around the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Today the Soviet is in a particularly favorable position because it can effectively exploit the emotional and political value of two slogans instead of one: it can appeal both to the idea of *Slavic brotherhood* and to the principles of *Communism* in their belligerent postwar version.

Hitherto Moscow has played the two themes with skill, applying them ruthlessly to the countries of Eastern-Central Europe. *First priority was obviously given to the Slavic nations*, and of these the politically least reliable Czechs and Poles have been encouraged to take action which

will not only make reconciliation with Germany inconceivable but will also increase their dependence on Russia for future protection. Bulgaria, considered ideologically safe, was used as a solid anchor state for the extension and assurance of Soviet domination in the Danube Valley. These Slavic countries were among the first to announce national economic plans closely following the pattern established by the various five-year plans of the Soviet Union. Within a year and a half of the official launching of Russia's fourth five-year plan, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria announced their two-year plans, and Poland a three-year plan of national reconstruction. Planning is indeed the order of the day in Danubian Europe, where collective economic projects are subservient to the current Soviet five-year plan and long-term Russian policies.

Of the *non-Slavic* participants in this pattern, the Rumanians have been preferred to the Hungarians and are now linked more closely to the Soviet, partly because the Rumanians are the more docile nation but above all because Rumania is closer to Russia and its strategic control more significant. Rumania is an essential part of the Soviet defense system; Hungary is not. As effective means of integrating Hungary within the economic orbit of the Soviets, two drastic measures were imposed recently, a new three-year plan and the immediate nationalization of major commercial banks. Soviet occupation forces and a recently reconstituted pro-Communist government succeeded in eliminating all opposition to these far-reaching objectives.<sup>20</sup>

On the whole, it is obvious that the U.S.S.R. will insist on keeping its occupation forces and officials in the key Danubian countries of Rumania, Bulgaria, Austria, and Hungary as long as possible. Since 1947 the most complete subordination of policy has developed in the military sphere. The process of gradual internal militarization is encouraged in several directions simultaneously. General military service, as an important political factor, has been made compulsory in each of the Danubian "people's republics." With the exception of the former enemy states, fairly large standing armies have appeared, invariably controlled by aggressive Communist-trained generals. The latter are not only instrumental in consolidating their own power and purging the army under their command, but are assuming an ever-increasing influence in purely civilian matters. Army leaders and chiefs of staff are consulted on important policy-making decisions of the government and are accepted as members of small, tightly organized "inner circles." This is particularly true in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. The former is so

military-minded that in 1947 its Parliament enthusiastically voted for a national defense appropriation amounting to 23 per cent of the total annual budget. The military development of Danubian countries is carefully coordinated through full-fledged military alliances, of which the Czech-Yugoslav and Czech-Polish treaties serve as prototypes. Their detailed provisions call for joint training, nationalization of weapons and equipment, and for complete staff cooperation. A closely synchronized military network seems to be in its formative stages here; Soviet leadership and domination is undoubtedly the salient factor in the process of Eastern European militarization.

Announcement of the Marshall Plan and Soviet-dictated refusals to participate in its negotiations gave added impetus to federal projects in Danubian Europe. The five satellite nations, compelled to choose between East and West and barring themselves from the economic life of other European countries, became increasingly dependent on each other. By the end of 1947 the problems of a Danubian federation were widely discussed and plans for its formation reached a new stage of political maturity. The new Danubian political pattern was most conspicuous in the treaties concluded by the Yugoslav and Bulgarian governments with several of the neighboring Central and Eastern European countries. These pacts displayed the following prominent features: (a) all countries concerned were to be aligned strategically, economically, and politically, both with each other and with the Soviet Union; (b) the base for the new federation was to be formed out of Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Albania, united into a single South Slav federated state, and (c) Tito was to be the military and Dimitrov the political leader of the whole federation. While Dimitrov was the principal diplomatic negotiator of these alliances, Tito emerged as the Danubian exponent of Soviet militarism.\* The Yugoslav army was developed into the strongest and most experienced of the entire area and the network of military alliances centered around Belgrade, a temporary clearinghouse for the postwar upsurge of this Danubian "pactomania."

In January 1948 the editors of *Pravda* revealed a startling change in Soviet attitude when they declared that plans for a Federation or a Confederation or even a customs union in Eastern Europe did not have the endorsement of the U.S.S.R. They advised the Danubian governments to consolidate and strengthen their domestic fronts and their own

\* This significant function was decisively interrupted by Tito's conflict with the Cominform hierarchy. In the long run, however, Yugoslavia is destined to assume the role of leadership in Danubian Europe.

"popular democratic forces" rather than continue the exaggerated emphasis on a Federation.<sup>21</sup> The *Pravda* statement caused an immediate about-face on the part of the vocal champions of an Eastern European Union and slowed down the process of regional political reorganization. In Dimitrov's apologetic reply to *Pravda* most of the belligerent remarks concerning an inevitable Danubian federation were humbly and hurriedly retracted. "Neither the Premier, nor any member of the government has thought of creating an eastern bloc in any form, and the creators of the western bloc are trying to distort the true point of view of the Bulgarian government."<sup>22</sup> At this stage of complete strategic withdrawal even the idea of a customs union was sacrificed. According to the official communiqué of the Bulgarian Telegraph Agency, Dimitrov denied having planned a general customs union in Eastern Europe, merely proposing a series of separate pacts concluded by Bulgaria with Yugoslavia, Rumania, Hungary, and Albania.

Whatever the reasons for Moscow's dissatisfaction with moves toward a formal, constitutional Federation in the Danube Valley, no such organization can come into being as long as the attitude expressed in the early 1948 issues of *Pravda* prevails. The Soviet's tactical decision to slow down or suspend the process of federalization shifted the emphasis toward an informal Danubian-Balkan alliance system. Recent methods of political integration aimed at the conclusion of long-term economic pacts between individual countries and military understandings between *people's armies* that would result in a strategic chain of mutual-assistance pacts.

#### THE COMMUNIST INFORMATION BUREAU (COMINFORM)

The establishment of a Communist Information Bureau carried the alliance systems of Eastern-Central Europe a long step closer to definite polarization. The declared aims of the new International were to coordinate the activities of Communist parties in at least nine European countries and to combat the "imperialism" of the United States. The Cominform was brought into being as a general staff in the ideological war against the Marshall Plan. The bitterly vindictive and overaggressive propaganda statements of the Bureau clearly indicate that Russian and Eastern European Communists were on the defensive ever since the first chance of an American-sponsored recovery program appeared on the European horizon. The Cominform plans to use every instrument of pressure and propaganda to ruin the immediate political progress of a non-Communist reconstruction of the Continent: countries

supporting American policies serve as major targets for the organization. Created in September 1947 at a secret international conference in Poland, the group was composed of the Communist parties of the Soviet Union, Poland, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia and two representatives of Western Europe, France and Italy. Two top Communist leaders from each of the nine countries participated in the initial series of meetings.

The formal basis for Cominform strategies derives directly from the revolutionary activities and rigid organization of the Third International. In March 1919, the Communist party of Russia called a group of left-wing Socialists together in Moscow, where the Third International was born. Inspired by the ideological violence of Lenin, founders of the Comintern called for a ruthless fight against renegade Communists, defiantly stating that old-fashioned, bourgeois concepts of democracy could not be accepted by determined revolutionaries. Their strategy was based on the Leninists' firm belief that world communism had outgrown its adolescence and had become a world-wide force of mature importance. Their new strategy, aimed at a close coordination of international Communist power, was pliable, subtle, and easily adaptable to varying needs. It relentlessly advocated unlimited Bolshevik expansion to be achieved through individual, national Communist parties.

Twenty-four years after its creation, in May 1943, Stalin officially disbanded the Communist International, which by then was sorely discredited in Eastern Europe. With a general reaction against the "proletarian" ideology of the first period of Bolshevism, the Soviet Union itself lost interest in spreading revolution abroad. Throwing over the original Bolshevik concept of a world revolution, Russia temporarily returned to the nationalism of Peter the Great and to his localized imperialist aims.<sup>23</sup> Freed of the Comintern framework, the Communist parties of Danubian Europe could adopt a new individuality. They began to recognize and appeal to the immense strength of patriotic sentiment which manifested itself in the forceful wartime and post-war nationalism of Eastern European countries. Their post-Comintern strategy stressed national class struggles and the consolidation of Communist power within the confines of each individual nation. The notion of a tight international coordination of all Communist parties was suddenly relegated into the background, displaced by the emphasis on all-out war effort. This brief phase drew to an end by the latter part of 1945, when the Soviet government decided to enlarge the scope of its

limited wartime objectives, and Soviet foreign policy came to rely increasingly on the Communist parties of Eastern Europe. The renaissance of an era of international Communist cooperation was fully assured when old-time leaders, many of whom had spent the war years in Moscow, gradually returned to their countries of origin. Georgi Dimitrov, former Comintern president, became premier of Bulgaria; Mátyás Rákosi triumphantly re-entered Budapest, where he had been a prisoner for many years; Klement Gottwald, in his new capacity of prime minister, accompanied other leaders of the Czech coalition government from Moscow to Prague; Emil Bodnaras and Ana Pauker returned to Rumania, ready to liquidate the only surviving constitutional monarchy in Danubia.<sup>24</sup>

Thus the stage was carefully set for the emergence of an international Communist agency, a second and revised edition of the prewar Comintern. Leading Soviet propagandists called for a revival of familiar Comintern methods and tactics. They openly advocated the necessity of a more violent strategy for Eastern Europe: the policies of brutality, outright duplicity, clumsy fakes, shadowy disguises, and manifest contradictions which characterized all new Cominform declarations and were so successfully applied in Budapest and Prague during the *Putsch* of 1947 and that of 1948. The birth of Cominform created a startling historical parallel with the immediate postwar period of the early nineteen twenties. The Communist parties of Eastern Europe, organized on a strictly national basis, are again using ultranationalist appeals in their undisguised effort to become full-fledged outposts of the Soviet Union. They are again motivated by a belligerent determination to achieve prestige, power, and total domestic control. They admire the Soviet Union with undiminished fervor and, with the possible exception of Yugoslavia, willingly submit to the dictates and policies of Cominform leadership.

#### PRINCIPAL STRATEGIES OF THE COMINFORM

According to a preliminary communiqué issued by the new Cominform, the absence of ties among the Communist parties of Central and Eastern Europe was a serious defect, a "wrong and harmful" development in the movement of international Communism. Lack of unity among the key Communist parties, the communiqué claimed, may eventually "bring harm to the working classes." The cardinal duty of the new Information Bureau would be to promote the exchange of political experience between various member groups, coupled with

the necessity of "coordinating the activity of Communist parties on a basis of mutual agreement." The composition of the Bureau was fixed at two representatives from the central committee of each party. In addition, the Bureau was to publish a semimonthly newspaper, *For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy!* appearing both in Russian and in English. The designation of Belgrade as the initial seat of the Cominform emphasized the significance of Yugoslavia as one of the anchor states in a thoroughly reorganized "Russian Europe." Yugoslavia's prominent role in the new Communist organization was diminished appreciably by Tito's recent break with Cominform leaders.

The founding fathers of Cominform were ranking Communist leaders of the nine participating countries. The Danubian states were represented by such aggressive personalities as Slansky, secretary general of the Czech Communist party and leader for Bohemia and Slovakia; Révai, belligerent newspaper editor and member of the Hungarian party's special political bureau; Gheorghiu-Dej, Rumania's deputy premier and powerful minister of national reconstruction; and Mrs. Pauker, promoted to be Rumanian foreign minister shortly after the initial Cominform meetings; finally, Foreign Minister Kardelj and Party Leader Djilas for Yugoslavia. The official inaugural statement of October 1947 appeared in the form of a general survey of world affairs, a lengthy Communist exposition of the international situation, directed primarily against the United States. It regarded the world as being divided into two camps: the Soviet Union and other "truly democratic" countries on one side, and the United States, supported by Great Britain and certain "aggressive Western countries" on the other. It also outlined the activities of the Communist parties in their forthcoming struggle against the exponents of a postwar imperialism.\* The Communists of the nine participating countries challenged the West with two major objectives:

- 1) In domestic politics, the special task of defending the national independence and sovereignty of their countries; and
- 2) In foreign affairs, the duty of displaying firmness and solidarity so that the plans of aggressors will "suffer complete collapse." This firmness must be pitted against aggression along all lines, state, political, economic, and ideological, in order to develop into a common, united *anti-imperialistic* and *democratic* platform [*sic*] for all participating Communist parties.

\* For complete details and full text of the Cominform<sup>6</sup> Resolution on World Affairs, cf. Appendix, pages 340-343.

In its specific details, Cominform strategy is directed against such active opposition forces as the right-wing Socialist groups of Western and Central Europe. These independent, anti-Communist factions within the Social Democratic movement of Europe are considered to be (in characteristically sanguine Cominform terminology) close partners of an international clerical reaction, proposing to destroy workingclass unity, and ultimately threatening war against the Soviet Union.<sup>25</sup> With the happy exception of the *Eastern democracies*, claim founders of the new International, European Communists and Socialists are unable to work together. The Socialists of several important countries are actually "facilitating the task of American capital, are provoking it to extortions and are pushing their countries along the road of vassal dependency on the United States."<sup>26</sup> Clement Attlee and Ernest Bevin of Great Britain, Léon Blum and Paul Ramadier of France, Kurt Schumacher of Germany, and Giuseppe Saragat of Italy are labeled by official Cominform declarations as the most notorious representatives of right-wing Socialism. Another line of vicious attack is aimed against the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, which have succeeded in setting definite and tangible boundaries to Communist ambitions, and in offering vigorous alternative principles of economic and political organization. The long-range objective is to provoke such tension between governments and Communist parties all over Western Europe that economic recovery would be crippled by strikes, by political crises, and, if necessary, even by civil war. Cominform publications, therefore, consistently hammer at the "Truman-Marshall Plan," describing it as a constituent part, a European subsection of the "general plan for the policy of global expansion pursued by the United States in all parts of the world."<sup>27</sup>

In June 1948 an unusual development weakened the effectiveness of the principal lines of Cominform strategy. The Cominform unexpectedly denounced Marshal Tito's leadership of the Yugoslav Communist party, accusing the Yugoslav leaders of pursuing a hateful and slanderous policy toward the Soviet Union and showing sympathy for Western methods. Eight of the original nine Cominform nations were represented at a secret meeting in Rumania, where the statement of denunciation was drafted and signed. The late Andrei Zhdanov, then a leading member of the Politburo, signed for Russia.\* Tito and his top lieutenants, particularly Kardelj and Djilas, were accused of retreating from Marxism-Leninism by "undertaking an entirely wrong policy on

\* This significant political statement is reproduced in its complete, original text in the Appendix, pages 344-351.



the principal questions of foreign and internal politics." The Cominform statement centered around three main charges with these assertions:

- 1) Tito's government turned away from the Soviet Union and the countries of people's democracy;
- 2) Tito's party is nationalist and not internationalist; and—last but not least—
- 3) it renounced the teachings of Marxism-Leninism which maintains that the Communist party stands for the leading and guarding strength in a country. Yugoslavia deviated considerably from this theory and "devaluated" its Communist party in considering the People's Front the source of its principal strength.

Yugoslavia's communist Party categorically rejected the Cominform charges against Tito and his government. "*A historic injustice has been done,*" the Yugoslav reply stated, "*and this will be taken advantage of by imperialistic enemies for propaganda and slander.*"\* It asked for "direct contact" between the Russian Bolshevik party and the Yugoslav party organization in an effort to iron out basic ideological differences. The Cominform soon reiterated its charges on even stronger terms. Tito's regime did not back down or weaken its hold on the Yugoslav people, even after the Bureau moved its headquarters to Bucharest and continued operation without Yugoslav participation. The schism between Tito and the Cominform was so vitally important and far-reaching in effect that its full impact on Danubian history cannot be appraised at the present time. Essentially it was the result of a qualitative difference between the all-powerful Yugoslav Communist party and several relatively weak and dependent parties in Danubian Europe. Tito's strong army and secret service, his continued resistance to Soviet infiltration, and proud spirit of nationalism were destined to precipitate sooner or later a serious and open break. His personal leadership was asserted so forcefully, in so many directions both at home and in neighboring countries, that he could easily be challenged either by competing Communist leaders in Eastern Europe or by the absolutist authority of the Kremlin. The denunciation of June 1948 was the expression of such a collective challenge, denoting the bitter dissatisfaction of eight Cominform-supporting nations with the overbearing, ardently nationalistic hero of "Partisan" Yugoslavia.

Although the attack on Tito, long regarded as one of the staunchest supporters of Communism in Eastern Europe, marked the first publi-

\* Italics mine.

cized fissure in Russia's European bloc, for the Danube Valley proper the varied activities of the Cominform brought a further tightening of Soviet rule. With Marxism as their fighting creed and occupation troops backing up the sweep of Communist dogmas, Soviet policy makers fashioned Danubian governments into a solid bloc, held together by similar political and economic regimes and directed by well-trained and ruthless experts in power politics. Since the ascendancy of the Cominform, each of the five countries has been compelled to take one or more steps forward on the well-worn path leading to complete Sovietization.

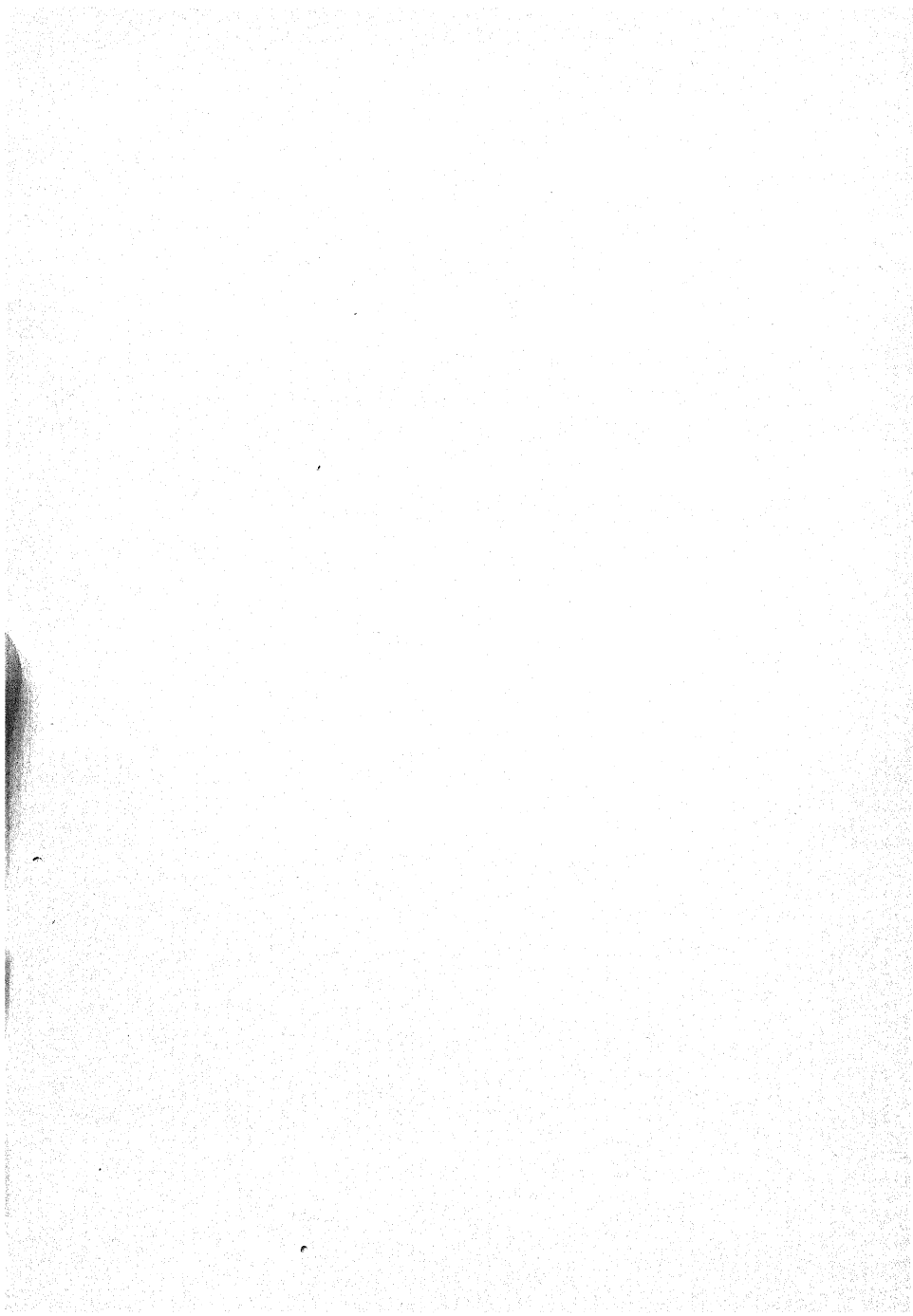
### NOTES TO CHAPTER VIII

1. "Eine Rede Beneschs," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, May 10, 1947, p. 4. British writers have shown particular interest in a Danubian or Balkan federation. Former President Benes' political principles are, for example, elaborated on in a recent editorial on "European Unity," *The Times* (London), May 15, 1947, p. 3. In Doreen Warriner's opinion, a federation of this type ought to cover "the East and at least two important industrialized states." Cf. *Eastern Europe after Hitler*, Essay in the Research series of the Fabian Society (London, 1946).
2. *Central Europe* (English edition, London, 1916), p. 4. Naumann's theories are carefully analyzed by Jean Weryha, *L'Équilibre Économique et La Sécurité de L'Europe Centrale* (Warsaw, 1937), p. 38 *et seq.*
3. Leo Pasvolksy, *Economic Nationalism of the Danubian States* (London, 1928), p. 190 *et seq.*
4. Josef Hanč, *Eastern Europe and the United States* (Boston, 1942), pp. 49-50; for a brief discussion of the customs union project, cf. also Dwight E. Lee, *Ten Years, The World on the Way to War, 1930-1940* (Boston, 1942), pp. 5-6; M. M. Ball, *Post-War German-Austrian Relations: The Anschluss Movement* (Stanford, 1937), and Sigmund Neumann, *The Future in Perspective* (New York, 1946), pp. 192-200.
5. "France Proposes Danubian Union," *Foreign Policy Bulletin*, March 25, 1932, pp. 1-2.
6. The original Czech-Polish pact has been carefully analyzed by a number of writers in this field. Cf. Eduard Táborsky, "The Czechoslovak-Polish Confederation," *The New Commonwealth Quarterly*, July 1942, pp. 13-18.
7. Documents and Reports, No. 1, *The Central and Eastern European Planning Board* (New York), May 28, 1942, pp. 13-14.
8. "Polish-Czech Economic Accord Important," *The New York Times*, July 5, 1947, p. 2. "The Czechoslovak-Polish Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance," *The Central European Observer*, March 21, 1947, p. 73.

9. Gruber's statements are quoted in detail in recent issues of *The Economist*, *The Central European Observer*, and *The London Times*. The quotation in this chapter is an excerpt from his article "Austria Infelix," in *Foreign Affairs*, Jan. 1947, pp. 229-238. Similar ideas are strongly reaffirmed by Karl Renner, "Austria: Key for War and Peace," *Foreign Affairs*, July 1948, pp. 589-603.
10. "Communists and Nationalism, Eastern Europe in 1947," *The Economist*, May 24, 1947, pp. 800-801.
11. *Uj Élet* (Budapest), Oct. 30, 1946. Cf. also "Ministerpräsident Groza in Budapest," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, May 3, 1947, p. 6, and "Der Besuch des Rumänischen Ministerpräsidenten in Budapest," *ibid.*, May 4, 1947, p. 2. A typically irrational Communist appraisal of this new relationship was offered by the Budapest periodical *Politika*: "Rumania does not participate in any power-system which is directed against us; she does not nurse nationalist or imperialist aspirations of her own, nor does she serve as an instrument for other people's aggressive imperialism . . . . The close Hungarian-Rumanian connection is truly a community of destinies, sober, ever-present and inevitable." Cf. Ferenc Paal, "Magyar-Román Sorsközösség," *Politika*, April 19, 1947. (Translation mine.)
12. *Magyar Nemzet*, May 4, 1947, p. 1.
13. Grigore Gafencu, "Eastern Countries and the European Order," *International Affairs*, April, 1947, esp. pp. 168-175.
14. William H. Lawrence, "Rumanians Leave for Sofia Parley," *The New York Times*, July 13, 1947.
15. *The New York Times*, Aug. 4, 1947. According to the well-developed pattern of these treaties, Danubian pacts of friendship, cooperation, and mutual assistance usually consist of six basic articles. The first two articles stipulate joint action and military assistance in event of aggression or threat of aggression by Germany or any state united with Germany. The third article excludes alliance with or participation in any coalition which either party considers directed against itself. This would exclude participation in the American-sponsored European Recovery Program or in the "Western Union" of Europe, because Russia has declared both hostile to its interests. The fourth article provides for consultation on all important international developments. The fifth calls for increased economic and cultural ties, and the sixth fixes the period of the pact at twenty years, renewable for periods of five years.
16. Cf. text of Albanian-Yugoslav Pact, Albanian Press Service (Tirana), Dec. 28, 1946, especially "Convention of Economic Collaboration between Yugoslavia and Albania," par. 1-5.
17. "Example of International Collaboration," *Otechestven Front* (Sofia), Dec. 29, 1946.

18. Hugh Seton-Watson, "Yugoslavia Today," *International Journal*, Spring 1947, p. 161.
19. *Economic Development in Southeastern Europe* (The Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 1945), Introduction, p. 11 *et seq.* Mitrany feels that in the present postwar atmosphere of Central Europe "there is clearly little prospect of progress along political lines."
20. Soviet policy of consolidating the Danubian states with the other countries of Eastern Europe into an integrated sphere of influence, is based on two types of measures:
  - 1) measures affecting all Danubian states more or less uniformly:
    - a) Marxist doctrine, including the establishment of the Cominform;
    - b) international federation of trade unions;
    - c) network of trade agreements;
    - d) network of political alliances; and
  - 2) measures affecting distinct groups of Danubian states:
    - a) the Slavic Congress movement (applicable particularly to Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria);
    - b) propaganda exerted through the Orthodox Church (Bulgaria, Rumania, and Yugoslavia); and
    - c) agrarian reform propaganda (most noticeable in Hungary, Rumania, and Yugoslavia).
21. Samuel L. Sharp, "Federation in Eastern Europe," *American Perspective*, March 1948, pp. 616-617.
22. Reported in *East Europe*, Feb. 12, 1948, pp. 6-7. At the Congress of the Fatherland Front Dimitrov's apology went even further, with the declaration that "*Pravda's* criticisms were well founded. *They were a timely warning to the possibly harmful enthusiasm of the people's democracies.*" (!) (Italics mine.) Cf. "A Problematic and Artificial Federation," *The Central European Observer*, Feb. 20, 1948, p. 30.
23. Franz Borkenau, *The Totalitarian Enemy* (London, 1940), p. 232 *et seq.* Cf. also *The Communist International*, by the same author, for a valuable descriptive treatment of the interwar existence of Comintern.
24. Martin Ebon, *World Communism Today* (New York, 1948), pp. 16-17, also pp. 25-26.
25. "Axioms of the Cominform," *The Economist*, Feb. 14, 1948, pp. 258-259.
26. Cf. Appendix for Cominform Resolution on World Affairs, originally published in *For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy!* (Belgrade), Nov. 10, 1947, No. 1, p. 1.
27. *Ibid.*

## Appendix



## Statement by the International Peasant Union

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### THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

*Mr. President:*

In the Declaration of the United Nations of January 1, 1942, underwriting the Declaration of Principles of August 14, 1941, known as the Atlantic Charter—in the Moscow Declaration of October 30, 1943—in the Armistice Conventions with Bulgaria, Hungary and Roumania—in the Declaration of the Yalta Conference of February 2, 1945, dealing with the liberated parts of Europe—in the statement of August 2, 1945, concerning the Potsdam Conference—in the Moscow Agreement of December 26, 1945, concerning Bulgaria and Roumania—in the United Nations Charter of June 26, 1945—and in the Peace Treaties with Bulgaria, Hungary and Roumania—

The Soviet Union made the following solemn pledges:

To respect the right of peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live and the right of peoples who have been deprived of sovereign rights and self-government to have them restored—

To cooperate in the establishment of a peace which affords to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries and which furnishes the assurance that the humans of all lands may live their lives in freedom from fear and want.

To make no use of its armed forces on the territories of other countries, after the cessation of hostilities, except for the ends mentioned in the international agreements, and even this only after it has concerted with the other Allied Powers—

To abandon the use of force—

To respect the independence and sovereignty of Bulgaria, Hungary and Roumania—

To promote conditions under which the peoples of Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Roumania and Yugoslavia may exercise their rights of sovereignty and self-government and thus possess themselves as soon as possible of Governments responsive to their will ascertained by means of free and unfettered national elections—

To respect fundamental human rights, the dignity and worth of humans and the equality of nations—

To promote conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations deriving from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained—

To observe the requirement for friendly international relations based on respect for the principles of equality and self-determination.

Discouraging and regrettable as it may be, our plain duty is to bring to the earnest attention of the General Assembly of the United Nations that there is not a single one of these obligations that the Soviet Government has not violated persistently. The Soviet armed forces have been used for aggressively subversive political, economic and social ends. The Allied Control Commissions have been converted into Soviet agencies. The Soviet occupation authorities have systematically prevented the Allied representatives from the discharge of their responsibilities and from assisting the peoples of the occupied countries, in accord with the international agreements, to solve their problems by means of democratic procedures. They have uniformly rejected the requests of these representatives on matters related to the implementation of these agreements on the ground that the steps contemplated constituted interference in the internal affairs of the occupied countries while the actual aim of this attitude has invariably been to deflect interposition capable of frustrating or mitigating the expansionist designs of the Soviet Government. The clauses relating to the reconstitution of democratic Governments and institutions in the occupied countries not only have not been honored by the Soviet Government but, on the contrary, everything possible has been done to prevent their proper implementation. The free and unfettered elections explicitly



enjoined by the international agreements were never allowed to take place or, as in the case with Hungary, if for some reason such elections were held, the duly elected majority was consistently handicapped in the implementation of its mandate from the people until it was reduced to an impotent minority and the will of the people had been overcome. The occupied countries have been denied the right of self-determination, while their citizens have been deprived of most elementary human rights and freedoms and have been exposed to systematic terror. Instead of being reconstituted as democracies the occupied countries are being rapidly transformed into totalitarian police states identified with the cadres of a single political party and affiliated with the international system of the Soviet Union. Over them hangs the constant threat of their formal absorption.

## I

In the political field the aggression of the Soviet Government has been effected by means of interference, pressure and subversive communist infiltration. Extensive use has been made of the communist parties and the efforts have been continuous to secure for them a dominant position in the political lives of these countries thus contravening democratic principles. The actual strength of these parties is so insignificant that under normal democratic processes they would have had hardly been entitled to participate in the Governments. For anti-democratic purposes extensive use has been made of political police. In fact, from a public service the police function has been transformed into a partisan terrorist agency. For the same reason the national defense forces have been purged of the regular army personnel. Thus communist control is being secured and the peoples of the occupied countries are being reduced into a state of helplessness in the face of the far-reaching aggressive designs of the Soviet Government.

The public judicial authorities have been displaced by unconstitutional extraordinary partisan tribunals so that the administration of justice has been pervaded by the practice of judicial assassination employed for the purpose of reducing the democratic element into subservience. Thus the judiciary has become a tool in the persecution of leading political opponents which relies on unconstitutional extraordinary measures framed and enacted for the liquidation of the democratic opposition by means of trials for "treason" and "conspiracy."

In this connection abusive interpretations of the terms Fascism, Reaction and Democracy have been turned to account; even the punishment for war crimes has not been overlooked as a weapon.

One of the methods used extensively against the democratic parties has been to reduce some of their leading members into subservience by means of pressure and intimidation, to split their forces and gradually eliminate or subordinate these parties as factors in political life. The occupied countries being predominantly agricultural in character, the peasant parties have been the main targets of this reprehensible practice. Expedients as these have been supplemented by suppression of the democratic press, by drastic curtailment of free speech, by repudiation of the right of association and assembly, by denial of radio and other facilities, etc. Along the same lines, the labor movements have been forcibly merged, the trade unions have been affiliated with the communist parties and thus labor as a whole has been identified with the totalitarian set-up.

Through the irrepresentative Governments controlled by the Kremlin the foreign policies of the occupied countries have been given an aggressive orientation which in subserving the designs of the Soviet Union threatens the peaceful relations of these countries with their neighbors and establishes a division contrary to the political and economic interests of Eastern and Western Europe as much as it is antagonistic to the principles of cooperation upheld by the United Nations.

In general, the utilization of the various methods for the politically subversive ends of the Soviet Union has respected formal legality only to the extent it appeared expedient, otherwise recourse to unconstitutional abrogations or open violations of the fundamental laws and legislations of the occupied countries has taken care of the aims in view. Thus many of the political measures of these Governments have not only gone counter to the letter and the spirit of the international agreements but have also constituted violations of the armistice agreements as well as of the peace treaties.

## II

The Soviet authorities have turned to account all possibilities for the purposes of economic aggression against and exploitation of the occupied countries. The result has been that their economic and financial situation have been seriously impaired; they have been prevented from reconstructing their economies and have been confronted with

unsurmountable difficulties in the feeding of their populations and supplying them with the indispensable minimum of consumer goods. Inflations and stabilizations of currencies have been manipulated in these countries for subversive political and social purposes rather than for the economic welfare of the peoples involved. In addition, the occupied countries have been prevented from reestablishing their normal international trade relations. Methods of economic exploitation have been systematically used to supply the deficiencies of the Soviet economy at the expense of the occupied countries.

Abuse of the armistice clauses relating to the occupation forces and their supply has constituted a serious burden on the economies and finances of the occupied countries. Unfair application of the reparation clauses and gross arbitrariness in fixing of the price levels have had the effect of stripping these countries of their products. Abusive interpretation of the international agreements relating to "German assets" has been utilized for the purpose of plundering the occupied nations and for the seizure of all their key industries and enterprises.

In one form or another compulsion has been applied with the purpose of shifting the foreign trade relations of the occupied countries to the detriment of their economic independence and of the pressing needs of their peoples for consumer goods which the Soviet Union is not in a position to supply. In addition, the Soviet plan has imposed the nationalization of the important industrial and commercial enterprises—not from the point of view of the economic interests of the peoples but from that of internal political communist control and of Soviet economic domination. Thus the general result tends to disrupt economic life and to create hardships for the sake of establishing communist controlled domestic economies affiliated with, and later integrated into, the Soviet economic system. This is the significance of the progressive isolation of these countries from international economic life and of the pressure to prevent them from participation in the plans for the reconstruction of Europe and from availing themselves of the economic and financial assistance of countries outside the Soviet system.

### III

Soviet aggression has not spared any of the existing institutions of the occupied countries regardless how remote from the political and economic fields. In its aim to reshape the whole social structure of these countries for the international purposes of communism, the com-

munist parties have taken over all educational and cultural establishments. Thus national educational institutions, from primary schools to highest institutions of learning and professional specialization, have been infested with the communist plague. The competent personnel has been removed and replaced by personnel the sole qualification and virtue of which is its communist affiliation. The curricula have been reshaped so that their main concern is to accommodate communist teachings and crude pro-Soviet propaganda. The admission to secondary schools and higher institutions of learning is no longer open to all citizens on the basis of scholastic attainments but is treated as a communist privilege.

The publications now appearing in these countries follow the Soviet models and are dominated by the exigencies of communist and pro-Soviet propaganda—everything else has been suppressed. The arts are no longer means of aesthetic expression and artistic attainment but vehicles of propaganda. In the same manner, religion in, and the ecclesiastical structures of, the occupied countries have been affected adversely—their effective function has been paralyzed and their activities disrupted. The freedom of worship has been threatened and religious education has been undermined. Division in the ecclesiastical hierarchies has been fostered for the purpose of reducing the predominant denominations into subservience. Thus the great majority of the coming generations of these countries are deprived of educational facilities and are exposed to aggressive narrow indoctrination, irreligiosity and amorality.

#### IV

The purpose of the Soviet Government in moving large bodies of armed forces and political agents into Eastern European countries and in appropriating the functions of the Allied Control Commissions has become unmistakably clear to the world from the developments which have taken place. It is obvious now that this set-up was dictated neither by military exigencies nor by the requirements of transition from a state of war into a state of peace. Moreover, it was installed in total disregard of the rights of the occupied countries stipulated in explicit international engagements on the part of the Soviet Union.

The peace negotiations have been delayed in order that the Soviet occupation of Eastern European countries be prolonged so that the subversive political and economic aims of the Soviet Union be accom-

plished before the necessity for evacuation arose. Soviet occupation has lasted now almost three years; the time has been used to effect fundamental changes and thus stabilize the position of the elements through which the independence and democratic institutions of the occupied countries are eventually to be destroyed. Thus the campaign in the name of freedom and democracy, so far as the aims of the Soviet Union in the occupied countries are concerned, turned out to be a forcible imposition of a most extreme and equally obnoxious totalitarian structure subservient to the interests of the international communist oligarchy. Having installed large bodies of armed forces in these countries, the Soviet Government proceeded to make use of the Control Commissions by transforming them from allied agencies supervising the application of the international and armistice agreements into Soviet agencies for interference in the internal affairs of the occupied nations—interference in all functions of government affecting all aspects of national political, economic and social life as well as of international relations.

## V

The information concerning Soviet activities in the occupied countries has been abundant but it has dealt mostly with particular events and has thus failed to convey adequately to international public opinion the fundamental ideas and aims which underlie those activities—to convey their sinister significance in relation to the international efforts of the United Nations. The situations which the Soviets found in the different countries were not exactly alike either from the formal point of view or from that of the factors to be dealt with. Thus although the steps taken in the different countries do not appear to be uniform, the fundamental ideas and purposes of the Soviets have been the same—developments have followed a single pattern and have had in view the realization of a general plan. The difference in the results is only a matter of degree—and not of principle or aim—depending on the difference of possibilities and factors to be overcome.

Therefore it is of fundamental importance to stress the main aspects of the Soviet general plan in order that its implications are evaluated properly. The program of the Soviets is not merely an opportunistic scheme of international power politics concealed behind the overworked slogan of Soviet security—it is an organic development the aims of which are advanced according to circumstances. It is an organic excrescence of the Soviet order the fundamental characteristics

of which are such that the Soviet Union is incapable to expand in any other fashion except by subverting the democratic orders of the victims and incorporating them into the international communist system, which is opposed to the international community of the rest of the world. There is no departure from this view except as a matter of temporary expediency. While the present order of the Soviet Union exists, the "spheres of influence" or the "friendly governments" must be made to conform to the Soviet pattern. Any other combination is unsafe for the order of the Soviet Union itself just as much as it is unreliable and ineffective insofar as the international aims of the Soviets are concerned. This is quite clear when one bears in mind that the Comintern and the relationships with the communist parties of other countries are of fundamental value. Although the use made of the communist parties of foreign countries for the purposes of the Soviet Union has been opportunistic, the international character of communism is a fundamental tenet, theoretically argued and fanatically held. Communism is an international movement and as such it is incompatible with the international aims of the democratic world just as much as it is incapable of change regardless of appearances.

The communist conception as to the international and internal stability of the Soviet system as well as of the requirements of its expansion involves the displacement and opportunistic destruction of the non-communist governments on its path. The procedure is that original coalition governments are reduced into mere facades of communist controlled regimes the key posts of which are utilized to prepare the cadres for, and eliminate the obstacles to, homogeneous communist governments. In the process of transforming the insignificant communist minorities into a controlling political factor, the other political parties are subjected to systematic pressure and infiltration. All potential weapons are utilized to disorganize their political strength, to disrupt their activities and eventually to outlaw their existence. In dealing with governments and political parties, although as far as possible formal requirements are met, neither the procedures used nor the contemplated substantive changes are intended to be of a temporary nature. The final result aims at the elimination of all constitutional factors and the transformation of the whole political structure from democratic into totalitarian.

One of the weapons in dealing with the democratic political parties is to adapt Soviet electoral methods to local conditions. Here the expe-

dients are extreme and brutal: persecution and intimidation of political leaders, abusive and even criminal utilization of police and armed forces, denial of electoral campaign facilities, barring and intimidation of voters, fraudulent voting, etc., expedients of the dark ages of political manipulation that stops at nothing. The notorious "single list of candidates" has been used for the purpose of securing incommensurate preponderance of communist candidates and of accommodating the subservient elements of other parties as far as feasible; it is an expedient of transition toward the exclusion of the other parties altogether. Aware of the fact that on a purely formal foundation the communist party is not durable, the Soviets have directed the political, economic and social destruction of the non-communist elements. The economic changes are being made primarily from the point of view of their political and social consequences, that is to say, they aim to create the elements on which the perpetuation of the communist control is to depend; economic considerations have played no part even though the communist jargon would have it that the measures are concerned with the well-being of the "proletariat." All public and private functions being identified with the communist parties, the social structures are being made subservient to communist control by means of the opportunities and privileges that attach to membership in these parties. In this manner, the political, economic and social transformations pursued in the occupied countries are component parts of the general plan of the Soviet Union which is fundamentally irreconcilable with freedom, democracy and the peaceful intercourse of independent nations.

## VI

If the fundamental characteristics of the Soviet pattern are understood adequately, then it becomes obvious that the aims of the Soviet Union are destructive of the aims of the United Nations. Then the developments that have taken place after the end of hostilities would have shown that the Soviet Union cooperates with democratic powers only to a very limited extent and always with the reservation of subserving international communist aims in the process as much and as far as given circumstances permit even though this may run counter to formal international engagements. Circumstances generated by aggressive plans imposed on the Soviet Union to avail itself of all the assistance that the democratic powers could afford. If the dangerous situation made some commitments unavoidable, the Soviet Government concealed its reservations behind innocent appearing phrases

and insisted upon apparently reasonable dispositions with the intention of turning them to account for the advancement of the actual international aims of the Soviet system. In this process, wherever the appearance of compliance with commitments was possible it was taken advantage of in order that adverse international reaction be avoided. Wherever this was not possible, however, violation was resorted to, reliance being placed on an aggressive propaganda for the purposes of camouflage and warding off the objections of the democratic elements of the countries affected and of the democratic world.

The program of the Soviet Union and the methods of its realization demonstrate their absolute incompatibility with the ends and means characteristic of the United Nations. Thus the unavoidable conclusion is that the present participation of the Soviets in the international effort is but a transitory expedient to be utilized only as long as it is opportune and useful. International cooperation, in the sense the democratic powers understand it, goes counter to the concepts, structure, methods and aims of the Soviet system. At least so long as the Kremlin believes that the Soviet Union is not to be confronted with a superior international force, any expectation of change even only of pace in the realization of the Soviet international scheme is illusory.

Under the circumstances, to sacrifice the small nations to the Soviet Union under the head of its security or because of reluctance to admit that the international effort is breaking down would very soon appear to have been not only unjust to the countries affected but also fatal to the organization of the United Nations itself. There is no way to evade the fact that international action for the emancipation of all Eastern European countries from the consequences of their occupation by Soviet forces has been long overdue and that it has to be undertaken before the situation of the whole European continent has deteriorated irreparably. The time has come to face matters with the frankness and the courage of which the democratic world is capable. International public opinion is already aware of the fact that international ineffectiveness is responsible for the present impasse which threatens the world with another conflict even before the liquidation of the last one. The intransigence of the Soviet Government is due primarily to the fact that the adverse democratic reaction to its policies has been timid to translate itself into effective international action. It is time for the United Nations to assert its international authority and to make full use of the means open to it for the restoration of the freedoms and independence of the nations "liberated" by the Soviet Union.



The Eastern European countries comprise a region which is negligible neither in area nor in numbers. In addition, the region is an integral part of Europe from every point of view. The geographic position of these countries gives them strategic importance. The possibility afforded to Hitler to subdue them without effective opposition on the part of the rest of the world accounts for the outbreak of the last general conflict and the spread of German conquests to the south, the west and the east. Economically Eastern and Western Europe are complementary. The economies of all European nations have always been interdependent, therefore it is not possible to solve their problems separately in terms of normal existence and peaceful relations, especially under the post-war conditions of production, exchange and financing. Without the participation of the Eastern European countries the attempts at the economic reconstruction of Western Europe are bound to be faced with unsurmountable difficulties, to say nothing of the fact that the rest of the problems of Europe will remain incapable of solution.

After so many pledges concerning the freedom and independence of all nations, to let down so many small nations and to abandon the masses of their peoples to the brutalities of communist subjugation for the sake of an illusory international unity is to undermine confidence in the ethical standards of international intercourse and to jeopardize the prospects of effective international organization. The international order is one and indivisible; to abandon the Eastern European nations to their miserable fate is to admit to the enlightened world that actually there is no serious intention on the part of the United Nations either to discharge its responsibilities or to create conditions making a future general conflict impossible. Small nations have always been the first targets of aggression and the failures of the international community to live up to its responsibilities have generated the conflicts among European nations. To condone one aggression means to invite another and thus drift into a serious conflagration. The developments in Eastern Europe involving serious violations of the international agreements and pledges represent the first major conquest after the end of hostilities and therefore are a test case. Upon the effectiveness of the measures stand or fall the whole future of the United Nations and the regard in which it will be held by world opinion. The present meeting of the General Assembly is crucial—it faces the imperative duty to find the ways and means to remove the threats to the general welfare and to peaceful relations.

## VII

Recognizing the fact that in flagrant violation of the international agreements and the pledges of the United Nations a situation has been created extinguishing the democratic institutions and threatening the political and economic independence of Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Roumania and Yugoslavia—in virtue of Articles 11 and 14 of the Charter of the United Nations—the General Assembly of the United Nations is respectfully requested:

1. To place on record the fact that the principles of the United Nations Organization have been violated and abused in Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Roumania and Yugoslavia by Governments that are not truly representative of the respective nations.
2. To avail itself of the means open to it in order that an International Commission is appointed to watch over the implementation of the dispositions of the Charter and of the international agreements affecting the political and economic independence, democratic institutions, public functions and international relations of these countries.
3. To request that in these countries caretaker Governments be formed as soon as possible in which the Ministries controlling the police, the army and the administration of justice be held by non-communists. These Governments to be charged with the task of framing new electoral laws along democratic lines, making the necessary preparations and holding free and unfettered elections under the supervision of the United Nations in order that these countries possess themselves of truly representative Governments.
4. To hold that the United Nations takes under its protection the life and liberty of the citizens of these countries subjected to communist persecution, authorizing the International Commission to investigate the charges of conspiracies and treasonable activities of which they have been accused or on the strength of which they have been sentenced.
5. To declare its readiness to accept Bulgaria, Hungary and Roumania as members of the United Nations as soon as, and only when, their sovereign rights have been restored to them and they are possessed of representative democratic Governments. And to decline honoring the credentials of the representatives of Yugo-

slavia and Poland so long as these countries fail to abide by the provisions of the Charter and the international agreements.

6. To grant a hearing to the free representatives of the Agrarian parties of these countries affiliated with the International Peasant Union.

G. M. DIMITROV

VLADKO MACEK

FERENC NAGY

GRIGORE N. BUZESTI

MILAN GAVRILOVIC

## President Truman's Message to Congress on the Marshall Plan (December 1947)

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*(Excerpts)*

To the Congress of the United States:

A principal concern of the people of the United States is the creation of conditions of enduring peace throughout the world. In company with other peace-loving nations, the United States is striving to insure that there will never be a World War III. In the words of the charter of the United States, we are "determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war."

We seek lasting peace in a world where freedom and justice are secure and where there is equal opportunity for the economic well-being of all peoples.

To this end, the United States played a leading role in the founding of the United Nations. We have supported that organization at all times to the best of our ability, and we have advanced a number of proposals for increasing its effectiveness in maintaining peace and security and in establishing the economic, social and moral foundations of peace.

We are working in the United Nations towards the elimination and control of armaments and, in a step without precedent or parallel, have offered to place our most powerful weapon under international control, provided that other nations agree to effective and enforceable safeguards against its use for destructive purposes.

The United States, in the conviction that a prerequisite to peace in the future is the just settlement of past differences, has labored to obtain fair and workable treaties of peace for former enemy states so that they may resume their places in the family of nations.

The United States has taken the lead in world-wide efforts to promote industrial and agricultural reconstruction and a revival of world commerce, for we know that enduring peace must be based upon increased production and an expanding flow of goods and materials among nations for the benefit of all. . . .

Another significant area of the world which has been considered in developing the recovery program is eastern Europe. A number of the governments of eastern Europe which were invited to participate in the work of the Paris conference on economic co-operation chose not to do so. Their failure to join in the concerted effort for recovery makes this effort more difficult and will undoubtedly prolong their own economic difficulties.

This should not, however, prevent the restoration of trade between eastern and western Europe to the mutual advantage of both areas. Both the report of the sixteen nations and the program now submitted to the Congress are based on the belief that over the next few years the normal pattern of trade between eastern and western Europe will be gradually restored. As the restoration of trade is achieved, the abnormal demands on the Western Hemisphere, particularly for food and fuel, should diminish.

## Letter from President Eduard Benes to Leaders of the Czech Communist Party\*

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### BENES LETTER

You sent me a letter on Feb. 21 in which you express your attitude on a solution of the crisis and ask me to agree with it. Allow me to formulate my own attitude.

I feel fully the great responsibility of this fateful hour on our national and state life. From the beginning of this crisis I have been thinking about the situation as it was forming itself, putting these affairs of ours in connection with world affairs. I am trying to see clearly not only the present situation but also the causes which led to it and the results which a decision can have. I am aware of the powerful forces through which the situation is being formed.

In a calm, matter-of-fact, impassionate and objective judgment of the situation I feel, through the common will of various groups of our citizens which turn their attention to me, that the will is expressed to maintain the peace and order and discipline voluntarily accepted to achieve a progressive and really socialist life.

How to achieve this goal? You know my sincerely democratic creed. I cannot but stay faithful to that creed even at this moment, because democracy, according to my belief, is the only reliable and durable basis for a decent and dignified human life.

I insist on parliamentary democracy and parliamentary government as it limits democracy. I state I know very well it is necessary to have social and economic contents. I built my political work on these principles, and cannot—without betraying myself—act otherwise.

\* Prague, Feb. 25, 1948. In this letter, written to the Central Committee of the Czech Communist Party, Benes expressed his views on the nation's political crisis.

The present crisis of democracy here, too, cannot be overcome except through democratic and parliamentary means. I thus do not overlook your demands.

I regard all our political parties associated in the National Front as bearers of political responsibility. We all accepted the principle of the National Front, and this proved successful up to the recent time when the crisis began.

This crisis, however, in my opinion, does not deny the principle in itself. I am convinced that on this principle, even in the future, the necessary cooperation of all can be achieved, all disputes can be solved for the benefit of the national and common state of the Czechs and the Slovaks.

I therefore have been in negotiation with five political parties, I have listened to their views, and some of them also have been put in writing. These are grave matters, and I cannot ignore them. Therefore, I again have to appeal to all to find a peaceful solution and new successful co-operation through parliamentary means and through the National Front.

That much for the formal side. As far as the personal side is concerned, it is clear to me that socialism is a way of life desired by an overwhelming part of our nation. At the same time I believe that with socialism a certain measure of freedom and unity is possible, and that these are vital principles to all in our national life.

Our nation has struggled for freedom almost throughout its history. History also has shown us where discord can lead.

I beg of you, therefore, to relive these facts and make them the starting point for our negotiations. Let us all together begin negotiations again for further durable co-operation, and let us not allow prolongation of the split of the nation into two quarreling parts.

I believe that a reasonable agreement is possible, because it is indispensable.

#### REPLY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CZECH COMMUNIST PARTY

The Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist party acknowledges your letter dated Feb. 24, and states again that it cannot enter into negotiations with the present leadership of the National Socialist, People's and Slovak Democratic parties, because this would not conform to the interests of the unity of the people nor with the interests of further peaceful development of the republic.

Recent events indisputably proved that these three parties no longer represent the interests of the working people of the cities and countryside, that their leaders have betrayed the fundamental ideas of the people's democracy and National Front as they have been stated by the Kosice government program, and that they assumed the position of undermining the opposition.

This was shown again and again in the government, in the assembly, in the press of these parties, and in actions which, with menacing levity, were organized by their central secretariats against the interests of the working people, against the alliances of the republic, against state finance, against nationalized industry, against urgent agricultural reforms—in a word, against the whole constructive effort of our people and against the very foundations, internal and external, of the security of the country.

These parties even got in touch with foreign circles hostile to our people's democratic order and our alliances, and in collaboration with these hostile foreign elements they attempted disruption of the present development of the republic.

This constantly increasing activity was crowned by an attempt which, as it was proved, should have been accompanied by actions aiming at a *Putsch*.

Massive people's manifestations during the last few days clearly have shown that our working people denounce, with complete unity and with indignation, the policy of these parties, and ask the creation of a government in which all honest progressive patriots devoted to the republic and the people are represented.

Also among the members of the above-mentioned three parties an increasing amount of indignation can be seen. The members ask for a rebirth of their own parties and National Front.

In conformity with this powerfully expressed will of the people, the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist party approved the proposals of Premier Klement Gottwald according to which the government will be filled in with prominent representatives of all parties and also big nation-wide organizations.

We stress that a government filled in this way will present itself, with full agreement with the principles of parliamentary democracy, before the constitutional National Assembly with its program and ask for its approval.

Being convinced that only such a highly constitutional and parliamentary process can guarantee the peaceful development of the republic



lic, and that at the same time it corresponds to the ideas of a complete majority of the working people, the Presidium of the Central Committee hopes firmly that after careful consideration you will recognize the correctness of its conclusions and will agree with its proposals.

## Sir Alexander Cadogan's Speech on the Czech Coup of February 1948\*

*Following is the statement made to the United Nations Security Council by Sir Alexander Cadogan, British delegate, in the debate over Czechoslovakia:*

The representative of a member of the United Nations, Chile, has requested, so far as I know in due and proper form, that the Security Council investigate his government's allegation, based on the charges brought by the former permanent representative of Czechoslovakia, while he still occupied that official position, to the effect that the political independence of Czechoslovakia has been violated by the threat of the use of force by another member of the United Nations, the U.S.S.R.

When we discussed the inclusion of this question in the agenda of the Security Council, the representative of the Soviet Union said that these charges are pure invention, pure slander, absolutely unfounded, absolute absurdity.

So we have charge and counter-charge, and it must be the duty of the Council to endeavor to arrive at the truth.

That, in matters of this kind, is of course not easy. Ex hypothesi, a government that wished to interfere in the internal affairs of another state would, having regard to various provisions of the charter, have to be careful to cover up its tracks. It would not nowadays, in the nature of things, proceed openly. (Though I would interject here that on past occasions, to which I shall make allusion later, before, perhaps, the technique had been fully developed, the Soviet government did not proceed so cautiously.)

\* This speech is a succinct and authoritative summary of Communist techniques used in several of the Danubian countries, particularly in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Quoted in full from the *New York Herald Tribune*, March 23, 1948.

The council will be advised to ask for proof in support of the allegations that have been made. I do not pretend that I, so far as I am concerned, possess absolute proof. I do not know—I have no means of knowing—what passed at any interviews which M. Zorin, the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, may have had in Prague during the period of the crisis. I do not know—we are not allowed to know—the details of the interview (of which I have only seen photographs) which took place between President Benes and Prime Minister Gottwald, nor can I know what arguments the latter used to induce the president to accept demands that were notoriously repugnant to him. President Benes could give us these, but since the coup, he does not appear to have had any facilities for publicity.

We cannot, I think, expect to get such direct evidence. But that does not relieve us of the responsibility to form an estimate of the likelihood of the truth of these charges.

Bland and bare denials are not, in this case, very convincing. We cannot be blind to what has been happening under our eyes during the past few years. Country after country on the confines of the Soviet Union has succumbed to the rule of a ruthless Communist minority. The events of 1939 to 1941, the succession of violent changes of attitude about the war made by Communist parties in every country in the world, proved that these parties took their orders from Moscow. The circumstances and the technique are always the same. Everyone remembers M. Vishinsky's visit to Bucharest when by means of—to say the least—unorthodox methods he fastened the Groza government of Romania, leading finally to the enforced abdication of King Michael, who had played a notable part in bringing Romania into the war on the side of the Allies.

In other countries we have seen the same process of a highly organized minority seizing power, purging all the elements opposed to it, smothering all democratic rule, suppressing all normal liberties and establishing a police state on a uniform model. What happened this month in Czechoslovakia had happened before in Romania, Albania, Hungary and Poland. In all these countries, in breach of solemn international pledges made at Yalta that free and democratic institutions would be established, all the parties but the Communist were gradually wiped out. In a number of these countries, Russian troops had been in occupation while the Communist minority seized and built up power. It is all so regular and uniform that one cannot but trace it to the same source.

In Soviet-occupied Bulgaria Communists also began by taking office in a coalition dominated by the agrarian party. M. Dimitrov and his small but highly organized group imported from Russia, then elbowed out the legitimate representatives of Bulgarian democracy until they were able to take power openly. Opinion in the United Kingdom was horrified not long thereafter by the judicial murder in Bulgaria of a great resistance leader, the Socialist, Petkov.

In Hungary the Communist technique was not only to install their men in key positions in the state but under the wing of the Red Army to penetrate other parties from within. The Social Democrat party has been brought by intimidation and trickery to fuse with the Communists, in spite of objections by the representatives directly elected by the working class on the party executive. When the Small-Holders party refused to give way the Soviet High Command stepped in to arrest Kovacs, the secretary-general. Hungary is now completely under Communist control, though only last autumn 80 per cent of the electorate voted against Communism.

That is the process that we have seen at work in country after country. And the latest example is the coup d'état in Czechoslovakia, which bears the regular hallmark. Of course, it might be said that all these events were the outcome of spontaneous movements in the countries in question, whose inhabitants became progressively convinced of the blessings of living under a totalitarian regime administered by a ruthless minority. Unfortunately, these upheavals generally seemed to coincide with the visit to the country concerned of a high Soviet functionary from Moscow. This coincidence of itself must rouse our suspicions, though I certainly would not suggest that the Communists maintain their close contact with Moscow through such overt visits alone.

Communist intrigue and penetration, plainly supported from abroad, is always at work underground. In the case of Czechoslovakia we have the statement of the new Minister of Foreign Trade, who is reported in the New York press to have said, "We must thank our Slav allies, and mainly the Soviet Union, for the fact that we succeeded in defeating reaction." I have since ascertained that this version corresponded with the first report issued by the official Czech Press Agency. Later the agency issued a correction deleting this passage.

In the last few months, since the inauguration of the Marshall Plan, Moscow seems to have given orders to increase the pace. We hear day by day of the brutal methods used in Greece to force the peasants against their will into the Communist movement, or to drive them

from their mountain villages as homeless refugees. The whole world knows that this is a deliberate policy to try to conquer Greece by starving its common people, and by creating such misery and chaos that the fighting spirit of the Greek army will break down.

Yet everybody knows that the Greek people are more united than ever before against this Communist aggression; that there is only a small minority of fanatical extremists, who could not last a month without the help, support and arms which they receive from their northern neighbors. We know of the preparations that are being made to help the Communists to seize power in Italy. The Italian government have seized arms being imported from Yugoslavia to the Italian Communist party in the last few weeks.

The latest coup in Czechoslovakia was handled according to typical Communist technique. It is a matter of public knowledge that Communist parties take their orders from Moscow, and according to the Cominform declaration of October last their activities in certain European countries, of which Czechoslovakia is one, are co-ordinated by the Cominform, of which the Soviet Union is the originator and the moving spirit. The conference of the Communist parties of various countries which met in Poland in September last decided on the creation of an information bureau, the tasks of the bureau being defined as "organising the exchange of experience among the parties and, if the necessity arises, co-ordinating their activity on the basis of mutual agreement."

What light does this evidence from other countries throw on the events which happened in Czechoslovakia the other day? Everyone is aware that the Czechs were passionate believers in parliamentary democracy. Between the wars, their parliament represented every section of their people; none worked more smoothly; none brought greater prosperity and social progress to every section of the people.

When President Benes returned to Czechoslovakia he was the symbol of the free democracy from which he drew his power. After his long exile he was rapturously received, and there was every evidence that he had the overwhelming majority of the nation in his support. Under his leadership the free Czech parliament was reestablished; there were free trade unions, a free press, freedom of speech and thought and writing. Masaryk often boasted that there was no iron curtain in Czechoslovakia, and visitors from abroad found that they could meet the whole press, say anything they desired, and be freely reported throughout the country. It may well be that the Communist party was expect-

ing to receive a far smaller vote in the forthcoming general election than it had received in 1945. That, no doubt, was the reason why it was so urgent to carry through the revolutionary change.

For can it be believed that the Czech people would willingly have suppressed these democratic freedoms, to which, ever since their liberation from the Austrian Empire, they had attached such store? Can it be believed that a gallant nation like the Czechs, who made such a magnificent resistance to the Nazis, whose airmen played so great a part in the battle of Britain—can it be believed that such a people would give up their democratic rights unless some threat of overwhelming force had been brought against them?

And can we doubt that, if the Czech people had freely accepted this change, their great national leaders, President Benes and Mr. Masaryk, would not have told the nation why the change had been required; would not have asked them to accept it; would not have played a major part in insuring that the nation as a whole genuinely agreed to what was done. Yet, what action did President Benes and Mr. Masaryk take to keep the nation united in support of the changes that were made? Mr. Masaryk made his last desperate sacrifice: he gave his life to prove to all the world that this change had been forced upon his nation.

President Benes has so far made no declaration to his people or to the world. Meanwhile, the propaganda of the new Czechoslovakian government tries to persuade the people that the Western powers have come out in their true colors as the enemies of Czechoslovakia. Nothing, of course, could be further from the truth, and I am convinced that this crisis has done nothing to lessen the feeling of friendship entertained by the British people for the people of Czechoslovakia. It is, of course, the usual technique of stirring up international hatred which we have seen employed in other countries of eastern Europe and above all in the Soviet Union itself.

We have been told, in the course of an earlier debate, that even if it could be established that there had been a violation of the Charter, there are some violations of the Charter which do not fall within the jurisdiction of the Security Council unless they involve a threat to the maintenance of international peace and security. I beg leave to doubt this. Article 24 confers on the Security Council "primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security," and it goes on to say that "in discharging these duties the Security Council shall act in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations." I find it difficult to believe, therefore, that if a member of the

United Nations were found to have violated one of the most important of these principles, the Security Council could find that that was a matter of no concern to it.

But even if I were proved wrong in this point, I should still maintain that in the present case, if violation of the Charter were proved, that might constitute a threat to international peace and security. It would be superfluous for me, and perhaps presumptuous on my part, to attempt to enlarge on this after what was said by the President of the United States in his address to Congress on March 17. There are limits beyond which this tide must not advance, and it must be dammed back. Almost everyone in the world must hope fervently that that can be done by peaceful means, but there is an undeniable risk that that hope may not be fulfilled.

In judging this case we must be careful, scrupulous and objective, but above all we must be very careful that we be not too easily fooled.

# Act I—1946, Concerning the Form of Government of the Hungarian State\*

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## *Preamble*

The exercise of royal power ceased in Hungary on November 13, 1918. The nation regained its right to self-determination. After a struggle of four centuries, the Assembly of Ónod, the Debrecen decree of 1849, attempts at two revolutions and the persecutions following them, the Hungarian people can again freely determine its form of government.

Parliament, elected on the basis of general, equal, direct and secret ballot, now creates a form of government in the name of the Hungarian people and following its mandate, a form which suits the desire and interests of the nation most directly: the republic of Hungary.

The republic assures for its citizens the natural and inalienable rights of man, and for the Hungarian people a well-organized state life and peaceful cooperation with other peoples. The natural and inalienable rights of man are in the first place: the rights of personal freedom, the right to a life free from oppression, fear and want; freedom of thought and the free expression of opinion; free exercise of religion, right of assembly and association; right to property, personal security, to labor and a dignified human livelihood; to free improvement of the mind and the right to participate in the life of the state and its local autonomies.

No citizen should be deprived of these rights without legal procedure and the Hungarian State assures all its citizens these rights without any discrimination, within the framework of democratic state-order and to an extent both uniform and equal.

In order to achieve this objective, the Hungarian Parliament now formally passes the following law:

\* Officially published on January 31, 1946; all excerpts translated by the author.



1. §. The Hungarian people is the exclusive source and owner of all constitutional power in the state. The Hungarian people exercises its legislative authority through a Parliament elected on the basis of general, equal, direct and secret electoral ballot.

2. §. 1) Hungary is a republic. The President is head of the republic.

2) The President is elected by Parliament for a period of four years.

3. §. Every Hungarian citizen can be elected President of the Republic, provided he is over 35 years of age and is qualified under the electoral laws to participate in parliamentary elections.

4. §. 1) The President's election is preceded by nomination. The written statement of at least fifty members of Parliament is needed to insure the validity of the nomination. The written nomination has to be submitted to the President of Parliament prior to the voting itself. A member of Parliament can nominate only one candidate. If one nominates several candidates, all of the nominations will become void.

[Sections 2-5 of §. 4. provide for a detailed constitutional procedure in the nomination and election of the President.]

5. §. Nobody can be elected President of the Republic twice in succession.

6. §. 1) The President of the Republic has to take an oath in Parliament.

[Sections 2 and 3 describe the exact wording of the oath.]

11. §. 1) The President of the Republic represents Hungary in international negotiations. He sends and receives ambassadors, appoints consuls and grants foreign consuls permission to carry on their activities in the country. He is authorized to conclude treaties with foreign powers but if the subject-matter of the treaty is within the scope of the legislature, approval of Parliament is needed for validation of the treaty.

2) The President of the Republic cannot declare war, announce the existence of a state of war, conclude peace negotiations or use the army outside the boundaries of the country without prior authorization by Parliament.

13. §. 1) The President of the Republic exercises executive power through a Ministry responsible to Parliament.

2) The President appoints and dismisses the Prime Minister in ac-

cordance with the dictates of the principle of parliamentary majority; on the advice of the Prime Minister he appoints the cabinet ministers.

3) Within eight days of its appointment the cabinet has to appear at a session of Parliament. The President cannot dissolve Parliament prior to this official act.

4) The counter-signature of the Prime Minister or of a responsible cabinet minister is needed for every act or decree of the President.

. . . . .

15. §. 1) The President of the Republic can resign only through a declaration submitted to Parliament, and only with approval of Parliament. Within fifteen days of this statement Parliament can request the President to withdraw his resignation. If the President abides by his decision, Parliament cannot withhold the acceptance of his resignation.

16. §. 1) The person of the President is inviolable; a separate law guarantees his protection in accordance with criminal laws.

2) If the President violates the constitution or the laws, Parliament . . . may impeach him in the presence of at least two-thirds of its total membership and with the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present.

. . . . .

18. §. The courts exercise judicial power in the name of the republic and pronounce judgment "In the name of the Hungarian Republic."

19. §. This law will become effective at the time of its reading in Parliament. It will invalidate all laws and decrees concerning the institutions of monarchy and regency.

This law, as the will of the nation, has to be obeyed by everybody.

*Dated Budapest, January 31, 1946.*

# Economic Cooperation Between Hungary and the U.S.S.R. Joint Soviet-Hungarian Companies\*

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1. *Aviation*.—The one existing Hungarian aviation company has been dissolved and aviation became a monopoly of the newly established joint company. The Hungarian Government undertook to hand over 12 airfields to this company, which means that with one exception all airfields which are in serviceable condition came under the control of the joint organization. According to the terms of the Agreement made between the two Governments the final value of assets brought into the company by the Soviet partner is to be established at a later date, according to the export-import prices of the Soviet Commissariat for Foreign Trade.

2. *Shipping*.—Equally as in the case of aviation the only important purely Hungarian shipping company has to cease operations and is being incorporated into the joint shipping company. Monopoly over Hungarian shipping has been assured for the Company by the lease for 30 years of the most important Hungarian port of Csepel and by granting priority rights to the Company for the lease of all other Hungarian port facilities and their equipment. Under the agreement all vessels which have been retained by Allied authorities in Austrian waters are to be transferred to the joint company after their release. By adding the value of these vessels to the value of other Hungarian assets brought into the company, the Hungarian contribution will be extremely out of proportion as compared with the Soviet share.

3. *Oil*.—Because of existing American interests in the oil industry and the fact that concessions given in the agreement to the joint company do not include all Hungarian territories, this company represents the

\* Quoted from A. Szegedy-Maszák, "Soviet Interference in Hungary" (Memorandum prepared in Washington, 1947).

least important menace to Hungarian sovereignty. The equilibrium between Soviet and Hungarian assets to be brought into the company is however greatly endangered by the provision that the final valuation of such assets has to be established at a later date.

4. *Bauxite*.—Bauxite is the most important Hungarian raw-material. This prompted the Soviet authorities to make the biggest effort in order to secure as complete as possible control over this industry. The main Hungarian bauxite company was owned by a Swiss Trust Company. Under heavy Soviet pressure the Hungarian Government had to acknowledge the right of the Soviet Government to take over about 42% of this company as a former German asset, disregarding different foreign claims for actual ownership of the stocks in question.

It is a common feature in all of the four agreements, that in contrast to Hungarian Corporation Law, the General Manager of the companies, who unvariably is a Soviet representative, has almost complete individual executive power, while disputes which cannot be settled within the Boards of the companies, have to be referred for arbitration to the two Governments concerned. There can be little doubt about the outcome of such an arbitration.

Constant pressure is being put on the Hungarian Government for special treatment of the joint companies. The Soviets insist on the exemption of the companies from taxes and they also demand the right of extracting their share in the current profits from Hungary. This would be not only against the general system of Hungarian foreign exchange administration, but would be a constant menace of the country being drained of its most vital working capital.

## Vyshinski's Act of Force\*

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The whole scheme was run on schedule. On February 27, 1945, the Soviet Vice-Commissar for Foreign Affairs Vyshinski was already in Bucharest. From the station he went directly to the Royal Palace. In a menacing tone he demanded that in two hours time King Michael dismiss the Prime Minister (General Radescu) as "incapable of maintaining order." Moreover, he went on to say that only a Cabinet presided over by Petru Groza and in which all key posts were entrusted to Communists would be acceptable to the Soviet Government. In the meantime the Soviet military authorities had disarmed the Rumanian garrison of Bucharest, had disbanded the *gendarmerie* and half of the police force of the capital after disarming the other half. At the time when Vyshinski was delivering the Soviet ultimatum to the King, Soviet tanks, mechanized units and patrols were swarming in the streets of Bucharest. Soviet troops were in possession of the Ministry of the Interior, Police Headquarters and the offices of the General Staff of the Army. The King had no alternative but to yield. It had become evident that the principles proclaimed at Yalta only two weeks earlier, concerning the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live, meant nothing to the Soviet Government.

The Groza Government, in which the Ministries of Justice, Interior, Propaganda, National Defense and Communications were given to Communists, was formed on the 6th of March, without the participation of the two strongest Rumanian parties: the National-Peasants and the Liberals. Minor positions were given to Communist satellite parties and to former German collaborators. The latter were at the mercy of the Soviet Government, which could always ask that they be sent for trial as war-criminals.

\* Quoted from A. Szegedy-Maszák, *Soviet Interference in Eastern Europe* (Washington, 1947).

After the formation of the Groza Government, Vyshinski made a public speech in Bucharest in which he said: "A new page has been turned in Rumania's history, a page in which is enscribed with golden letters the friendship of Rumania towards the Great Soviet Union and towards Marshal Stalin." On the 13th of March, Vyshinski presided over a special meeting of the Groza Cabinet, as well he was entitled to do.

## Social Democrats in Rumania

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### STATEMENT BY CONSTANTIN TITEL PETRESCU, LEADER OF THE INDEPENDENT SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY\*

The Independent Social Democratic party continues to be treated as the enemy No. 1 of the Government with Communist tendencies. We are outlawed; and we are allowed to hold only absolutely private meetings—and only then in the capital. Not a single paper is allowed to mention the demonstrations of our party, all news concerning our party being censored.

Our candidates in elections have been prevented from working and have been dubbed opponents of the united labor front. The most prominent militants of our party were ill-treated and imprisoned. Terrorist methods against our movement have been intensified. Any protest forwarded to the Government is ignored, the Ministers refusing to grant audiences to the delegates of our party who can only forward written memoranda to complain of abuses or arbitrary acts of the Government against the members of our party.

All our hopes, expressing the hopes of the whole Rumanian people, are centered on the four Foreign Ministers assembled in Moscow. We think it impossible that the idea of liberty, legality and internal pacification should not find an echo in the hearts of those who are endeavoring to organize peace among nations.

\* *The New York Times*, March 13, 1947.

## Platform of the Bloc of "Democratic Parties" in Rumania (1946)\*

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"The Platform of the Bloc of Democratic Parties," under which Dr. P. Groza's government ruled the country and which constitutes also the program of the new Parliament, includes a number of points, the mere reading of which explains the adhesion of the Rumanian voters and the success of the government in the elections.

The parties included in the Bloc assume under this program the following engagements towards the electorate, the Crown and the whole Rumanian people:

"1. Ensuring a democratic regime and the full sovereignty of the Rumanian State, within the framework of a constitutional monarchy.

"2. Respect of individual property and ensuring the conditions towards strengthening and raising the material welfare of family and nation.

"3. Ensuring civil right and freedom:

Freedom of speech

Freedom of the press

Freedom of meeting and association

"4. Ensuring the free profession of religious creeds.

"5. Ensuring political, economic and social rights for women.

"6. Ensuring equal rights to all non-Rumanian nationalities, by applying the Statute of Nationalities.

"7. Prosperity of the Rumanian people and the non-Rumanian nationalities closely bound to the defense and consolidation of the democratic regime.

"8. Consolidation and defense of peace, alongside of all peace- and freedom-loving nations.

\*Excerpts from *Rumanian Review*, Nos. 8-9, Jan. 1947, pp. 17-18.



"9. Close and permanent relations with the U.S.S.R. and the neighbouring countries, as well as with the United States of America, Great Britain, France and other democratic countries."

For the peasantry, the program stresses especially the principle of individual property:

"Peasant farms based on individual property of the soil will be supported and consolidated."

## Communists and Social Democrats Unite in Rumania\* (November 1947)

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Following the decision of the Social Democrat and Communist Parties to form a joint organization called the United Workers' Party, the secretaries of the two parties met several times to draw up a common platform. This platform will ensure that this will be no mere mechanical merger but a real unification of the two parties. The program falls into two parts, one dealing with general principles and the other with details of organization and aims.

Ideology and Organizational Principles

1) The United Workers' Party must be the vanguard of the working class;

2) The ideology of the U.W.P. is the class ideology of the proletariat—Marxism-Leninism. The U.W.P. will base its activities on the teachings of the great theoreticians of the proletariat,—Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin;

3) The U.W.P. will uphold a high standard of class integrity and will make no concessions of principle to any other class or party. It will fight with revolutionary determination all enemies of the working class and its ally—the working peasantry—as well as their agents within the ranks of the proletariat.

4) The U.W.P. will be inspired by the love of country and people. It will eschew all chauvinism and will fight all racial or national discrimination. It will be guided by the principle of proletarian internationalism and the brotherhood of peoples;

[Articles 5, 6, and 7, each subdivided into a number of paragraphs, deal with organizational details and statutes governing membership. All organs of the party are to be elected at congresses or conferences.]

* *Romanian News*, Jan. 1948, No. 1.

8) All decisions will be taken after free discussions and by majority vote. Criticism and self-criticism must constitute the main methods of improving the work of the party's organizations. Internal party democracy will reign throughout.

[Article 9 states that the basis of the party will be the self-denying defense of the interest of the working class, the struggle for the abolition of the exploitation of man by man and of national oppression, and the fight against any infringement of the equality of rights between men and women.]

Immediate Tasks Ahead

10) The U.W.P. has the immediate task of fighting for the consolidation of the new popular democracy in Romania.

11) The U.W.P. will stand for: a) the development of heavy industry which is the foundation of the country's rehabilitation and economic independence, b) steady increase of production and efficient administration of industrial, agricultural and commercial enterprises including those wholly or partly run by the State, c) strengthening and development of State enterprises and a planned economy, d) development of agriculture through the extension of tractor stations and the employment of all methods of scientific farming, e) the organization and control of distribution by means of co-operatives, and State and private trading. (Special attention will be paid to the development of producer and consumer co-operatives in town and village), f) democratic distribution of the national income by a steady rise in the material and cultural standards of the working population, g) strengthening of the State apparatus and the Romanian democratic Army.

12) The U.W.P. will fight for reforms aimed at fulfilling an important part in the democratic development of Romania, such as tax, judicial, educational and administrative reforms.

13) The U.W.P. will encourage by all means the development of Romanian science, culture and art, as well as that of the other peoples inhabiting Romania. It will fight with determination the bourgeois imperialist ideology in whatever form it may appear. Science, culture and art must become the property of the whole nation, and the necessary conditions must be created to allow the sons of workers, peasants and poor intellectuals to have a share in them.

14) An urgent task of the U.W.P. is the liquidation of all remnants of fascism and reaction in public life, the State administration, the teaching profession, and culture.

Foreign Policy

15) The U.W.P. will stand for the development of good relations with all freedom- and peace-loving people of all countries who respect the independence and sovereignty of nations.

The bases of Romania's foreign policy are the close relations of friendship and co-operation in all spheres with the U.S.S.R.—the friend, liberator and supporter of Romania, and the only country where Socialism has become a reality, a country radiating light to all working people.

The U.W.P. will strongly advocate the strengthening and development of friendship, co-operation and mutual assistance with the neighboring countries in which new democracies have been established. Side by side with other truly democratic peoples, Romania must become an active factor in the peoples' struggle against imperialism, for a just peace among nations, and democracy throughout the world.

The U.W.P. will denounce with determination the policy of imperialist and reactionary circles and their agents—the policy of expansion, of robbing the people of their sovereignty and independence, of the revival of Fascist hotbeds and warmongering plots. It will show brotherly solidarity with the victims of imperialist policy—the people of Greece, Spain, China, Indonesia, Indochina, etc.

Ultimate Aims of the U.W.P.

16) The ultimate aim of the U.W.P. is the achievement of a Socialist society—the first stage towards Communism—in which any exploitation of man by man disappears. In this society the principle “from each according to his capacity, to each according to his work,” will reign. This in turn will lead to the realization of the superior stage, i.e. the Communist society—in which there are no more classes, and in which the principle “from each according to his ability, and to each according to his needs” shall apply.

Text of King Michael's Abdication Proclamation*

(December 1947)

Michael I, by God's grace and national will King of Romania, to all, present and future, good health.

During the last years great political, economic and social changes have occurred in the life of the Romanian state, creating new relations between the principal factors of public state life.

These relations do not correspond any more to the conditions established by the fundamental pact that is the country's constitution and the demand for a quick and fundamental change.

In view of this situation, in complete accord with the country's responsible factors and conscious of my responsibility, I consider that the institution of the monarchy does not correspond to the present conditions of our state's life, because it represents a serious impediment to Romania's development.

Consequently, fully conscious of my action's importance, which I carry out in the Romanian people's interest, I abdicate in my own and in my successors' name from the throne renouncing, for myself and for them, all the prerogatives that I exercised as King of Romania.

I leave it to the Romanian people to choose the new form of state.

Mihai R.

Given at Bucharest today, Dec. 30, 1947.

* *Romanian News*, Jan. 1948, No. 1.

Text of the Rumanian Government's Proclamation to the People* (December 1947)

Workers, peasants, intellectuals, soldiers, noncommissioned officers, officers, women citizens and men citizens:

King Michael I abdicated from the throne today. In the act of abdication, signed today, Dec. 30, 1947, he says that "during the last years deep political, economic and social changes occurred in the life of the Romanian State, creating new relations between principal factors of public state life."

In view of this situation and in complete accord with the country's responsible factors, the King considers that "the institution of the monarchy does not correspond to the present conditions of our state's life because it represents a serious impediment to Romania's development."

Thus, the Romanian people have conquered the liberty to build a new form of state—a people's republic.

Freed in 1944 from the yoke of the Hitlerite invaders and that of their Romanian servants, the Romanian people took destiny into their own hands. Led by the organized, conscious and unswerving working class, allied to the working peasantry, the Romanian people shook off the yoke of the big land-owners, punished those who betrayed the people's interests, and removed from the country's government those who defended the interests of the people's exploiters.

Thus, the Romanian people succeeded in creating a democratic regime that they continue to strengthen.

The monarchy constituted an impediment to our country's development toward a regime of popular democracy that would assure material and cultural well-being to those who work, and would assure the Romanian state's independence and sovereignty.

* *Romanian News*, Jan. 1948, No. 1.

Through the abolition of the monarchy new roads of great achievement are opened to our popular democracy.

Workers, peasants, intellectuals, soldiers, noncommissioned officers, officers, women citizens and men citizens:

Let us raise the new form of life of our state—The People's Republic of Romania, a country belonging to all those who work by hand and brain in town and village.

Law Providing for a New People's Republic in Rumania* (January 1948)

Art. 1.—The Chamber of Deputies takes cognizance of the Act of Abdication of King Michael I in his own and his successors' name.

Art. 2.—The Constitution of 1866, with the additions of March 29, 1923, and of September 1, 1944, and of those which followed them, is abrogated.

Art. 3.—Romania is a People's Republic. The name of the Romanian State is "The People's Republic of Romania," abbreviated R.P.R.

Art. 4.—Legislative power will be exercised by the Chamber of Deputies until its dissolution and until a Legislative Constituent Assembly takes its place. The Legislative Constituent Assembly will meet at a date to be fixed by the Chamber of Deputies.

Art. 5.—The Constituent Assembly will decide upon the new Constitution of the People's Republic of Romania.

Art. 6.—Until the coming into force of the new Constitution, the Executive Power will be exercised by a Praesidium of five members, elected by a majority vote of the Chamber of Deputies, from among personalities of public, scientific and cultural life of the People's Republic of Romania.

Art. 7.—The members of the Praesidium of the People's Republic of Romania will take oath of loyalty to the Romanian people in the presence of the Chamber of Deputies in the following manner: "I swear to defend the rights and liberties of the Romanian people, the independence and sovereignty of the People's Republic of Romania and its laws."

Art. 8.—Within three days after the publication of this law, the

* *Romanian News*, Feb. 1948, No. 2.

Army and all public servants shall take oath: "I swear to be faithful to the people and to defend the People's Republic of Romania against its enemies at home and abroad. I swear that I will respect the laws of the People's Republic of Romania and will keep official secrets."

Army, frontier guards and gendarmes shall take oath: "I swear to be faithful to the people and to defend the People's Republic of Romania against its enemies at home and abroad. I swear that I will respect the laws of the People's Republic of Romania and keep official secrets. I swear that I will obey military laws and regulations on all occasions."

Art. 9.—The promulgation of the present law shall be made by the President of the Council of Ministers.

Yugoslav-Rumanian Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance^{*} (December 1947)

This is the text of the Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance, signed in Bucharest by Prime Minister Petru Groza for the Romanian State, and by Prime Minister Marshal of Yugoslavia Iosip Broz-Tito, for the Yugoslav People's Republic:

Convinced that strong friendly relations and close co-operation in all spheres correspond to the real interest of the peoples of the Yugoslav Federal Republic and the Romanian people, and that these constitute a guarantee for their liberty, independence, development and prosperity, as well as a guarantee for the consolidation of the peace in the Balkans;

Considering the vital interests of the two countries in common defense and considering the experience of the last World War, in which Germany attacked series of European countries, threatening their liberty, independence and territorial integrity;

Firmly determined to fight against any aggression directed against their peoples, and to oppose their combined forces to any attempt to resurrect German imperialism and its supporters under any form;

Wishing to strengthen the friendly relations already existing between the two countries, and solemnly to re-affirm their resolute will to defend in the future their liberty, independence and territorial integrity in common, and to order their mutual relations in a spirit of friendship and co-operation and in the interest of consolidation of peace and of international co-operation;

^{*} *Romanian News*, Jan. 1948, No. 1.

“ . . . The two Parties agreed upon the following:—

Art. 1.—The High Contracting Parties agreed in the interest of the two countries and of their peoples to affirm their resolute wish to conduct a policy of firm and durable friendship by close co-operation between the two countries.

Art. 2.—The High Contracting Parties will consult each other in all important international questions, affecting the interests of the two countries, or peace and international co-operation, and will act in common agreement, in the spirit of the United Nations' Charter, applying in common whatever measure is necessary to assure their security, independence and territorial integrity.

Art. 3.—Should one of the High Contracting Parties be involved in hostilities against Germany, as result of a renewal of the German policy of aggression, or should it become victim of attack on part of a third State or States—attack aiming to threaten its independence, to subjugate it or to invade its territory—the other High Contracting Party will accord without delay its military assistance or any other help with all means at its disposal.

Art. 4.—The High Contracting Parties undertake not to conclude any alliance or to take part in any action which might be directed against one of them.

Art. 5.—The High Contracting Parties will take the most suitable measures to deepen and strengthen economic, cultural, and all other relations between the two countries, on the basis of agreements and treaties concluded for this purpose.

Art. 6.—The present agreement does not in any way affect the obligations of the Romanian state and the Yugoslav People's Federal Republic towards other States. The High Contracting Parties will apply the present agreement in the spirit of the United Nations' Charter, and will support every initiative aiming to remove any focus of aggression and to assure peace and security in the world.

Art. 7.—The present treaty will come into force on the day it is signed, and will then be submitted for ratification. The instruments of ratification will be exchanged in Belgrade. The present treaty will remain in force twenty years, starting on the day of its signing. Should one of the High Contracting Parties not express the desire, twelve months before the expiration of the term, to denounce the present treaty, this treaty will remain in force for further five years, and renews itself automatically, until one of the High Contracting Parties

notifies the other in writing twelve months before the expiration of the current five-year period, of its intention to denounce it.

This Treaty is concluded in Bucharest in the year 1947, on the nineteenth of December, and made in two copies, in Romanian and Serbian; both texts are equally valid.

Official Program of the Bulgarian Communist Party* (1946)

Georgi Dimitrov outlined the party's program for the development of a new state on the eve of the referendum for the abolition of the monarchy:

"1. Bulgaria will not be a Soviet Republic; she will be a People's Republic, in which the directing power will be wielded by the majority of the nation: workers, peasants, artisans and intellectuals. There will be no dictatorship, but in a People's Republic the decisive factor rests basically with the working majority of the nation, with the people whose labor is socially useful, and not with the big speculative capital and a small bourgeois minority that is politically and morally decayed and bankrupt.

"2. Bulgaria will be a People's Republic where private property, acquired by toil and thrift, will have real state protection against brigand speculators, and where the big speculative capitalists will not be allowed to condemn the working people to hunger and misery.

"3. Bulgaria will be a People's Republic which will not leave a single door open for the restoration of the shameful past of the Monarchy, of Fascism and of Bulgarian chauvinism, and which will give all the constitutional guarantees that are indispensable for the development of our country along the lines of progress and the well-being of our people until all exploitation of man by man has been suppressed.

"4. Bulgaria will be a People's Republic, a free and independent state with national sovereignty and she will not dance to the tune of capitalist trusts desirous of subjugating the small nations politically and economically.

* Reprinted by permission from *World Communism Today* by Martin Ebon, published by Whittlesey House, Copyright, 1948, by Martin Ebon.

"5. Bulgaria will be a People's Republic that will be a factor of unity and Slav brotherhood against any possible aggression. She will never take part in any anti-Slav or anti-Soviet policies that lead towards hatred among nations.

"6. Bulgaria will be a People's Republic which, together with other democratic nations that have regained their liberty, will represent an element of peace and democracy in the Balkans and in Europe, and not an instrument of military adventures and of aggressive wars."

Independents and Neutrals in Communist Bulgaria* (1947-1948)

Under the heading "Independent Does Not Mean Indifferent" the Organ of the National Committee of the Fatherland Front, "Otechestven Front," writes:

"The forthcoming re-organization of the Fatherland Front will make it possible to include in the united political organization of the anti-imperialist forces in Bulgaria not only all the members of the existing political parties, but also the mass of independents.

"Will the independents avail themselves of this opportunity?

"In the present stage of our political development all questions have been posed with absolute clarity. They have been posed in such a manner as to demand from every conscientious citizen of the republic to give his reply categorically and clearly.

"The program of the Fatherland Front is the program of the present and future of the country. Internationally, this program has put us on the side of the democratic countries, with the Soviet Union in the lead, standing on guard in defense of peace against imperialists and war-mongers. This program has helped us to preserve the integrity of our territory, our independence and existence as a nation.

"For or against democracy; for or against peace; for or against our national independence—there lies the essence of the question for or against the program of the Fatherland Front. There is no room for hesitation. Neutrality is inadmissible here.

"Internally, the program of the Fatherland Front has put before us just as clear and categorical questions. We are on the way to socialization. Everyone, according to his forces, can facilitate or hinder this process. The problem is clearly put: we must build up such a political

* *Free Bulgaria*, Jan. 15, 1948, p. 25.

and economic order as will eliminate exploitation and social injustice. Together with this, we must mobilize all the forces and resources of the nation in order to overcome our economic backwardness and to achieve within decades what others have achieved in hundreds of years of free life.

“The solution of such a task does not pertain to party or class, but is a question of the whole nation.”

Constitution of the People's Republic of Bulgaria

*Approved by the Grand National Assembly
on December 4, 1947*

CHAPTER ONE

THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

Art. 1. Bulgaria is a People's Republic with a representative Government established and consolidated as a result of the heroic struggle of the Bulgarian people against the monarcho-fascist dictatorship, and of the victorious national uprising of 9th September 1944.

Art. 2. In the People's Republic of Bulgaria all power emanates from the people and belongs to the people.

This power is exercised through freely elected representative organs and through referenda.

All representative organs of the State power are elected by the citizens, by a general, direct, and secret ballot.

Art. 3. All citizens of the People's Republic who are above 18 years of age, irrespective of sex, national origin, race, religion, education, profession, social status or material situation, with the exception of those under judicial disability or deprived of their civil and political rights, are eligible to vote and to be elected.

All persons serving in the ranks of the Bulgarian people's army can vote and can be elected on the same basis as all other Bulgarian citizens.

Art. 4. The people's representatives in all representative organs are responsible to their electors. They may be recalled before the expiry of the term for which they have been elected.

The manner in which elections are held and the rules for recalling people's representatives are determined by law.

Art. 5. The People's Republic of Bulgaria is governed in exact accordance with the Constitution and the laws of the country.

CHAPTER TWO

PUBLIC ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION

Art. 6. The means of production of the People's Republic of Bulgaria belong to the State (national property), to cooperatives, or to private individuals or juridical persons.

Art. 7. All mineral and other underground natural resources, forests, waters, including mineral and curative springs, sources of natural power, railway and air communications, posts, telegraphs, telephones, and radio broadcasting are State, i.e. national property. A special law shall regulate the utilization of forests by the population.

Art. 8. National economy is the basis of the country's economic development and enjoys special protection.

The State can itself manage or give under concession its own means of production.

Art. 9. The State aids and fosters cooperative enterprise.

Art. 10. Private property and its inheritance, together with private enterprise in economy, are recognized and protected by law.

Private property acquired by labor and thrift and the right to inherit it enjoy special protection.

No one can exercise his right of ownership to the detriment of public interest.

Private monopolistic agreements and associations such as Cartels, Trusts etc. are prohibited.

Private property may be subject to compulsory restrictions or expropriation only for State or public use and against fair indemnity.

The State can nationalize fully or in part industrial, trade, transport or credit enterprises or branches thereof. The indemnity is determined by the Law for Nationalization.

Art. 11. The land belongs to those who cultivate it.

The law determines how much land private persons may own and the cases in which non-agriculturists may own cultivable land. Private ownership of large landed estates is not permitted.

Cooperative-Labor Farms are fostered and aided by the State and enjoy its special protection.

The State may organize State farms.

Art. 12. All State, cooperative, and private economic activity is directed by the State by means of a general economic plan with a view to the most rational development of the country's national economy and the promotion of the public welfare.

In preparing and implementing the national economic plan the State avails itself of the active collaboration of professional, economic and public organizations and institutes.

Art. 13. Foreign and domestic trade are directed and controlled by the State.

The State may reserve to itself the exclusive right to produce or trade in any goods which are of essential importance to the national economy and the needs of the people.

Art. 14. Labor is recognized as a basic public and economic factor and is the object of the State's care in every aspect.

The State directly aids those who work—workers, peasants, craftsmen and intellectuals—by means of its general economic and social policy, tax system, cheap credits and cooperative organization.

With a view to improving the standard of living of the working classes, the State encourages their constructive initiative and enterprise.

CHAPTER THREE

SUPREME ORGANS OF THE STATE POWER

Art. 15. The National Assembly is the supreme organ of the State power.

Within the framework of the Constitution it is repository of all State power insofar as certain particular functions do not fall within the competence of other and subordinate organs of the State power and of the State administration by virtue of the Constitution.

Art. 16. The National Assembly is the only legislative organ of the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

Art. 17. The National Assembly.

1. Elects the Presidium of the National Assembly.
2. Appoints the Government of the People's Republic.
3. Amends the Constitution.
4. Decides on the establishment of new Ministries and the abolition, fusion or re-naming of existing Ministries.
5. Decides questions of the cession, exchange or increase of the territory of the People's Republic.
6. Approves the State economic plan.
7. Approves the State budget and the laws for the application of the budget, and determines taxes and the method of their collection.
8. Decides on the nationalization of economic enterprises and the introduction of State monopolies.

9. Decides questions of war and peace.
10. Decides on the holding of referenda.
11. Grants amnesties.

Art. 18. The National Assembly is elected for a term of 4 years.

It consists of deputies elected by the people, one for every 30,000 inhabitants.

Art. 19. The National Assembly is summoned for ordinary sessions by an order of the National Assembly twice a year—on November 1 and on February 1. If the Presidium fails to summon the Assembly on these dates the latter can meet on its own.

The National Assembly may be summoned for an extraordinary session by a decision of the Presidium of the National Assembly or on the demand of at least one third of the deputies.

Art. 20. At its opening sitting, under the chairmanship of the oldest deputy, the National Assembly elects from its number a Bureau consisting of a President and 3 Vice Presidents.

The President (or in his absence the Vice Presidents) conducts the proceedings in the National Assembly in accordance with the Rules of Procedure adopted by the National Assembly.

The National Assembly also elects the necessary number of Secretaries and Disciplinary Officers in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

Art. 21. The deputies take the following oath:

"I swear in the name of the people and of the People's Republic that I will serve them devotedly and selflessly, that I will observe and hold sacred and inviolable the Constitution, that in my activity as a representative of the people I will keep in view only the interests of the Nation and the State and will spare no effort in defense of the freedom and independence of my country. I have sworn."

Art. 22. Immediately after it has been constituted, the National Assembly elects a commission for verifying the elections and within a period of not more than 3 months submits a report confirming or annulling the election of each deputy individually.

Art. 23. Legislative initiative belongs to the Government and to the deputies.

Deputies can introduce bills if they are signed by at least one fifth of the total number of deputies.

Art. 24. After being passed by the National Assembly, each law is signed by the President and Secretary of the Presidium of the National Assembly and is published in the State Gazette.

The law comes into effect 3 days after its publication, unless a different term is set by the law itself.

Art. 25. The National Assembly has the sole right to decide whether all the requirements of the Constitution have been observed for making a law and whether it is contradictory to the provisions of the Constitution.

Art. 26. The National Assembly can hold a sitting if more than half of the total number of deputies are present. Decisions are then taken by a simple majority except in cases for which the Constitution has made special provision.

Art. 27. The National Assembly's sittings are public, unless it decides that important State interests demand that they be held in camera.

Art. 28. The National Assembly can make investigations and inquiries into any question through special commissions.

All organs of the State and private persons are obliged to supply the information and documents required by these commissions.

Art. 29. Deputies cannot be detained or prosecuted except for grave offenses and with the consent of the National Assembly or, if it is not in session, with the consent of its Presidium. Such permission is not necessary if a deputy has been apprehended in the commission of a grave criminal offense, in which case it is sufficient to notify the Presidium of the National Assembly forthwith.

Deputies are immune from penal proceedings for their opinions expressed in the Assembly or for their votes.

Art. 30. The National Assembly is dissolved on the expiry of its mandate, or earlier if it so decides.

In the event of war or other exceptional circumstances the National Assembly can prolong its mandate for their duration.

The dissolved National Assembly can be recalled by its Presidium and its mandate prolonged in the event of war or other exceptional circumstances.

Art. 31. A new National Assembly is elected at the latest three months after the dissolution of the previous Assembly.

Art. 32. Deputies receive remuneration determined by the National Assembly.

Art. 33. The National Assembly by a majority of more than half of the total number of deputies elects the Presidium of the National Assembly consisting of a President, two Vice Presidents, a Secretary and 15 members.

Art. 34. The Presidium of the National Assembly is responsible to the Assembly for all its activity.

The National Assembly may at any time change the Presidium or its individual members.

Art. 35. The Presidium of the National Assembly has the following functions:

1. Summons the National Assembly.
2. Fixes the date of elections for the National Assembly.
3. Publishes the laws passed by the National Assembly.
4. Interprets the laws in a way binding on all.
5. Issues edicts.
6. Exercises the right of pardon and amnesty.
7. Institutes Orders and decorations and awards them.
8. Represents the People's Republic in its international relations: appoints and recalls diplomatic and consular representatives of the country abroad on the recommendation of the Government and receives foreign representatives accredited to it.
9. Ratifies and denounces international treaties concluded by the Government.
10. When the National Assembly is not in session, the Presidium can, on the recommendation of the Government, declare a state of war in the event of an armed aggression against the People's Republic, or in the event of an urgent necessity of fulfilling international obligations relating to common defense against aggression; in such a case the Presidium immediately summons the National Assembly to pronounce on the measure taken.
11. Proclaims, on the recommendation of the Government, a general or partial mobilization and a state of siege.
12. When the National Assembly is not in session, the Presidium may, on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, relieve of duty and appoint individual members of the Government. The Presidium is obliged to submit this to the ratification of the National Assembly at its earliest session.
13. Repeals the decisions and directives of the Government which do not conform to the Constitution or the laws of the country.
14. Fixes the date of a referendum on the decision of the National Assembly.
15. Appoints or discharges the Staff of the High Command of the armed forces of the People's Republic on the recommendation of the Government.

16. Appoints and discharges the Commander in Chief of the armed forces on the recommendation of the Government.

17. Remits uncollectable debts.

18. Decides questions with which the National Assembly has entrusted it.

19. Discharges all functions which have been assigned to it by law.

Art. 36. Decrees issued by the Presidium of the National Assembly are signed by the President and the Secretary.

Art. 37. After the expiry of the mandate of the National Assembly, or if it is dissolved before the expiry of its term, the Presidium which the Assembly has elected continues to exercise its functions until the newly elected National Assembly elects a new Presidium.

CHAPTER FOUR

ORGANS OF THE STATE EXECUTIVE

Art. 38. The Government (Council of Ministers) is the supreme executive and administrative organ of the State in the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

Art. 39. The Government consists of:

President of the Council of Ministers,

Vice Presidents of the Council of Ministers,

President of the State Planning Commission,

President of the Commission for State Control,

Ministers, and

President of the Committee for Science, Arts and Culture.

The President and Vice Presidents of the Council of Ministers can hold the office of a Ministry, of the State Planning Commission, the Commission for State Control or the Committee for Science, Arts and Culture, or they can be Ministers without Portfolio.

The Ministries are:

1. Ministry of Foreign Affairs

2. Ministry of the Interior

3. Ministry of National Education

4. Ministry of Finance

5. Ministry of Justice

6. Ministry of National Defense

7. Ministry of Trade and Supply

8. Ministry of Agriculture and Forests

9. Ministry of Construction and Roads

10. Ministry of Communal Economy and Works
11. Ministry of Railway, Road and Water Communications
12. Ministry of Posts, Telegraphs and Telephones
13. Ministry of Industry and Handicrafts
14. Ministry of Electrification and Bonification
15. Ministry of Mines and Mineral Wealth
16. Ministry of Public Health
17. Ministry of Labor and Social Security

The National Assembly may by a vote of more than half of the total number of deputies establish new Ministries, or abolish, fuse or re-name the existing Ministries.

The Presidium of the National Assembly can, on the recommendation of the Government, appoint Assistant Ministers to the various Ministries.

Art. 40. The National Assembly elects and relieves of their functions the Government or individual members of the Government.

The Government is responsible to the National Assembly and gives account of its activity to it.

When the National Assembly is not in session, the Government is responsible and gives account to the Presidium of the National Assembly.

Art. 41. The members of the Government take the following oath before the National Assembly:

"I swear in the name of the people and of the People's Republic of Bulgaria that I will serve them devotedly and selflessly, that in my activity as a member of the Government I will keep in view only the interests of the Nation and the State, that I will strictly observe the Constitution and the laws of the People's Republic and will spare no effort in defense of the freedom and independence of the People's Republic of Bulgaria. I have sworn."

Art. 42. Members of the Government may also be persons who are not deputies.

Art. 43. The Government directs the State administration by unifying and coordinating the work of the various Ministries, the State Planning Commission, the Commission for State Control and the Committee for Science, Arts and Culture; takes measures for the implementation of the State economic plan and of the State budget; it takes steps to ensure public order, to defend the interests of the State and the rights of the citizens; it directs the general line of the foreign policy of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and of national defense, and also

supervises the observance of the laws and of governmental measures.

The various members of the Government direct their respective Ministries within the framework and on the basis of the general policy and directives of the Council of Ministers.

The Council of Ministers can take under its direct control certain branches of the administration by forming for the purpose commissions, committees, councils, general directorates, directorates, or services directly subordinate to it.

Art. 44. Each deputy has the right to question and interpellate the Government or its members.

The latter are obliged to answer questions within the period laid down by the Rules of Procedure, and interpellations—when put on the agenda.

Art. 45. The members of the Government are penally responsible for any violation of the Constitution and the laws and for any criminal offense committed in the discharge of their functions.

They bear civil responsibility for damage caused by them to the State or to private citizens by their unlawful acts.

The responsibilities of the members of the Government and the procedure for their prosecution are regulated in detail by a special law.

Art. 46. Officials must take an oath of loyalty to the People's Republic.

They bear disciplinary, penal and civil responsibility for offenses committed in the discharge of their duties.

CHAPTER FIVE

LOCAL ORGANS OF THE STATE POWER

Art. 47. The territory of the People's Republic is divided into Municipalities and Counties.

Larger administrative units may be created by special laws.

Art. 48. Organs of the State in the Municipalities and Counties are the Municipal and County People's Councils which are elected by the local population for a term of three years.

Art. 49. The Municipal and County People's Councils direct the implementation of all economic, social, and cultural undertakings of local significance in conformity with the laws of the country. They prepare the economic plan and budget of the Municipality and the County within the frame of the State economic plan and the State budget and direct their implementation; they supervise the correct administration

of State property and the economic enterprises in their area; they supervise the preservation of public order, the observance of the laws and the defense of the rights of the citizens; they direct the activity of their subordinate executive and administrative organs.

Art. 50. Within the limits of their competence local People's Councils take decisions and issue orders in compliance with the laws and general directives of the superior organs of the State power.

Art. 51. Executive and administrative organs of the Municipal and County People's Council are the Municipal and County Executives consisting of a President, Vice Presidents, Secretary and members.

Municipal Executives in smaller inhabited localities may consist only of a President and Secretary.

Art. 52. In the execution of their tasks Municipal and County People's Councils rely on the initiative and mass participation of the people and of their political, professional and other organizations.

At least once a year, in the manner regulated by law, Municipal and County People's Councils give an account of their past activity to the electors.

Art. 53. The sessions of the Municipal and County People's Councils are regular or extraordinary. Municipal People's Councils meet for a regular session every month and County People's Councils every other month.

The Municipal and County Executives may summon the Councils to an extraordinary session on their own initiative, on the demand of one third of the Councillors or on the order of the corresponding superior State organ.

Art. 54. Municipal and County Executives are subordinate both to the People's Councils which have elected them and to the superior organs of the State administration.

Art. 55. Departments for the various branches of administration may be formed at the Municipal and County People's Councils; they are to be directed by the Executives of the Councils. In their work these Departments are subordinate both to the executive of the People's Council to which they are attached and to the corresponding Department at the superior People's Council and to the corresponding Ministry or Government Service of the People's Republic.

CHAPTER SIX

COURTS AND PROSECUTION

Art. 56. The courts apply the law strictly and equally to all citizens.

Judges are independent; in giving their decisions they act only according to the dictates of the law. They pronounce their decisions and sentences in the name of the people.

Art. 57. Assessors also take part in the administration of justice.

The occasions and procedure for their participation are determined by law.

Art. 58. Judges of all ranks and assessors are elected except in the cases explicitly laid down by law.

The law determines which judges and assessors are elected by the citizens in accordance with the rules and regulations of the general, equal, direct and secret ballot, and which by the local People's Councils, or by the National Assembly, and the term for which they shall be elected.

Art. 59. Special courts for specific lawsuits and crimes may only be created by a special law.

Art. 60. The constitution of courts, their procedure, the conditions of eligibility of court officials and the procedure for electing and recalling judges and assessors, as well as the grading of courts are determined by law.

Art. 61. Supreme judicial control over every kind and grade of court is exercised by the Supreme Court of the People's Republic the members of which are elected by the National Assembly for a term of 5 years.

Art. 62. Supreme control over the correct observance of the law by different Government organs and officials and by the citizens is exercised by the Attorney General of the People's Republic.

It is the particular duty of the Attorney General of the Republic to attend to the prosecution and punishment of crimes which affect the state, national and economic interests of the People's Republic, and crimes and actions detrimental to the independence and state sovereignty of the country.

Art. 63. The Attorney General of the People's Republic is elected by the National Assembly for a term of 5 years and is subordinate to it alone.

Art. 64. All other Prosecutors at courts of every grade are appointed and discharged by the Attorney General of the People's Republic, and

in the exercise of their duty are subordinate only to Prosecutors directly over them, while all Prosecutors are subordinate to the Attorney General.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ORGANS OF THE STATE POWER AND THE ORGANS OF THE STATE ADMINISTRATION

Art. 65. The Presidium of the National Assembly has the right to repeal all decisions and directives of the Council of Ministers which do not conform with the Constitution and the laws of the country.

The Council of Ministers has the right to repeal all decisions and orders of any of its members which do not conform with the Constitution, the laws, or the decisions and directives of the Government.

Art. 66. The Presidium of the National Assembly and the superior local People's Councils have the right to repeal unlawful or irregular acts of the inferior People's Councils.

Art. 67. The Government and each of its individual members have the right, within the limits of their competence, to repeal the unlawful or irregular acts of Municipal and County Executives.

The Executives of superior People's Councils have the same right with regard to the Executives of inferior Councils.

Art. 68. Each Municipal or County People's Council can repeal unlawful and irregular acts of its Executive.

Art. 69. The Government or its individual members, within the limits of their competence, and similarly the Executive of a superior local People's Council, may suspend the execution of the unlawful and irregular acts of an inferior local People's Council and refer the question of repeal to the Presidium of the National Assembly, or to the People's Council of the same rank.

Art. 70. A superior People's Council as well as the Presidium of the National Assembly may dissolve an inferior People's Council in its area and hold elections for a new People's Council.

Superior People's Councils as well as the Presidium of the National Assembly may discharge the Executive of an inferior People's Council in its area and hold elections for a new Executive.

CHAPTER EIGHT

BASIC RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF CITIZENS

Art. 71. All citizens of the People's Republic of Bulgaria are equal before the law.

No privileges based on nationality, origin, religion and material situation are recognized.

Every preaching of racial, national or religious hatred is punishable by law.

Art. 72. Women have equal rights with men in all spheres of the state, private, economic, public, cultural and political life.

This equality is realized by guaranteeing to women on an equality with men the right to labor, equal pay for equal work, the right to rest, to social insurance, to pension and education.

Mothers enjoy special protection in respect to work. The State takes special care of mothers and their children by establishing maternity homes, crèches, kindergartens and dispensaries, guarantees paid leave to mothers before and after childbirth, and free midwifery and medical aid.

Art. 73. Citizens have a right to work.

The State guarantees this right to all citizens by planned economy, by systematically and continually developing the productive forces of the country and creating public works.

Labor is paid according to the amount and quality of the work done.

Labor is a duty and a point of honor for every able-bodied citizen. It is the duty of every citizen to engage in socially useful labor and to work according to his powers and ability.

Citizens' Labor Service obligations are determined by a special law.

Art. 74. Citizens have a right to rest.

This right is guaranteed by limited working hours, by holiday with pay once a year, and by the establishment of a large system of rest-homes, clubs, etc.

Art. 75. Citizens have a right to pension, aid and compensation in the case of disease, accident, disablement, unemployment and old age.

This right is put into practical effect through social insurance and accessible medical aid guaranteed by the State.

Art. 76. Marriage and the family are under State protection.

Only civil marriage performed by the competent organs is legally valid.

Children born out of wedlock have equal rights with the issue of lawful marriage.

Art. 77. The State takes special care of the social, cultural, labor, physical and health education of the youth.

Art. 78. Citizens are guaranteed freedom of conscience and religion, and of performing religious rites.

The Church is separate from the State.

A special law regulates the legal status, the questions of material support, and the right to self-government and organization of the various religious communities.

It is prohibited to misuse the Church and religion for political ends or to form political organizations with a religious basis.

Art. 79. Citizens have a right to education. Education is secular, with a democratic and progressive spirit. National minorities have a right to be educated in their vernacular, and to develop their national culture, while the study of Bulgarian is obligatory.

Elementary education is compulsory and free of charge.

Schools are run by the State. The establishment of private schools may be allowed only by a special law, in which case the school in question is under State supervision.

The right to education is guaranteed by schools, educational institutes, universities as well as by scholarships, student hostels, material and other aid, and special encouragement for gifted students.

Art. 80. The State cares for the development of science and art by establishing research institutions, publishing houses, libraries, theatres, museums, public reading clubs, art galleries, film studios, cinemas etc. and by aiding persons who have shown ability in a given sphere.

Art. 81. The State takes care of national health by organizing and directing health services and institutes, propagates health education among the people and pays special attention to the physical culture of the people.

Art. 82. The freedom and inviolability of the individual are guaranteed.

No one may be detained for more than 48 hours without a decision of the judicial authorities or the Prosecutor.

Punishment can be inflicted only on the basis of the existing laws.

Punishment is personal and corresponds to the crime committed.

Punishment for crimes can only be inflicted by the established courts.

The accused has a right to defense.

Art. 83. All Bulgarian citizens abroad enjoy the protection of the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

Art. 84. In the People's Republic of Bulgaria foreigners enjoy the right of sanctuary when they are prosecuted for defending democratic principles, for struggling for their national liberation, for the rights of the workers or for the freedom of scientific and cultural activity.

Art. 85. Homes are inviolable. Without the consent of the householder no one may enter his home or premises and conduct a search there unless conditions required by law are observed.

Art. 86. The secrecy of correspondence is inviolable except in the event of mobilization, state of siege, or when special permission is given by the judicial authorities or the prosecutor.

Art. 87. Bulgarian citizens have the right to form societies, associations and organizations provided they are not contrary to the State and public order established by the present Constitution.

The law forbids and punishes the formation of and participation in organizations the aim of which is to deprive the Bulgarian people of the rights and liberties gained with the national uprising of 9th September 1944 and guaranteed by the present Constitution, or to encroach on these rights and liberties, or to imperil the national independence and State sovereignty of the country; or organizations which openly or secretly propagate fascist and anti-democratic ideology or facilitate imperialist aggression.

Art. 88. The citizens of the People's Republic are guaranteed freedom of the press, of speech, of assembly, of meetings and demonstrations.

Art. 89. Citizens have the right to make requests, complaints and petitions.

Every citizen has the right to demand court proceedings against officials for offenses committed in the discharge of their duties.

Citizens have a right to compensation from officials for damage caused them by the latter owing to unlawful or irregular execution of their duties.

Art. 90. The defense of the country is a supreme duty and a point of honor for every citizen.

Treason to the motherland is the gravest crime against the people and is punished with the full severity of the law.

Art. 91. Military service is obligatory for all citizens in accordance with the special laws.

Art. 92. Citizens are bound to observe the Constitution and the laws of the country strictly and conscientiously.

Art. 93. Citizens are bound to preserve national property and by all their actions to further the economic, cultural and defensive power of the country and the welfare of the people.

Art. 94. The citizens' burden of taxation is distributed in accordance with their paying ability. These obligations and exemption from them are established only by law.

CHAPTER NINE

COATS OF ARMS, STATE SEAL, FLAG, CAPITAL

Art. 95. The Coat of Arms of the People's Republic of Bulgaria is round; with a Lion Rampant in the center, ears of corn on either side of it, a five-pointed red star over its head and "9.IX.1944" in gold below.

Art. 96. The State Seal bears the State Coat of Arms.

Art. 97. The Flag of the People's Republic of Bulgaria is tricolored—white, red and green, placed horizontally. The upper left-hand corner of the white stripe bears the Coat of Arms of the People's Republic.

Art. 98. The Capital of the People's Republic of Bulgaria is Sofia.

CHAPTER TEN

AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

Art. 99. The Constitution may be amended on the proposal of the Government or of at least one quarter of the deputies.

The Constitution Amendment Bill is put on the Agenda of the National Assembly within a week from its introduction in the Assembly.

It may be passed by a majority of two thirds of the total number of deputies. The Law for the Amendment of the Constitution comes into effect on the day of its publication in the State Gazette.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

TEMPORARY PROVISIONS

Art. 100. After the present Constitution comes into effect, the Grand National Assembly, elected on 27th October 1946, elects a Presidium of the Grand National Assembly in accordance with Art. 33; the Presidium immediately assumes the functions provided for by the Consti-

tution. This terminates the functions of the Presidium of the Grand National Assembly, elected in accordance with Art. 2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Grand National Assembly. The deputies elect in accordance with Art. 20 of the present Constitution a President and Vice President for conducting the proceedings in the Grand National Assembly.

Art. 101. The Presidium of the Grand National Assembly appoints provisional Municipal and County Executives with the prerogatives of People's Councils until Municipal and County People's Councils, provided for by the Constitution, are elected.

The Cominform Resolution on World Affairs*

(October 5, 1947)

Representatives of the Communist party of Yugoslavia—Comrades Edvard Kardelj [Yugoslav Vice-Premier] and Milovan Djilas [Yugoslav Minister without portfolio]; Bulgarian Workers' party [Communist]—Comrades Vulko Chervenkov and V. Poptomov; Communist party of Romania—Comrades [Gheorghe Gheorghiu] Dej and [Mrs. Ana] Pauker; Hungarian Communist party—Comrades M. Farkash and József Révai; Polish Workers' [Communist] party—Comrades [Vice-Premier Wladyslaw] Gomulka and G. Minz; All-Union Communist party [Soviet Union]—Comrades A. [Andrei] Zhdanov and [Georgi M.] Malenkov; Communist party of France—Comrades [Jacques] Duclos and [Étienne] Fajon; Communist party of Czechoslovakia—Comrades R. Slansky and S. Bashtovansky; and the Communist party of Italy—Comrades [Luigi] Longo and [Eugenio] Reale—having exchanged viewpoints on the question of the international situation, have come to an agreement about the following declaration:

Essential changes have taken place in the international situation as a result of the second world war and in the post-war period.

These changes are characterized by the new disposition of the main political forces operating on the world stage, by changing relations between victor states in the second world war and by their regrouping.

While the war was going on, Allied states in the war against Germany and Japan joined together and formed one camp. However, in the Allied camp, even during war time, there existed different war aims and also differences of tasks of the post-war organization of peace.

The Soviet Union and democratic countries considered as the main

* *For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy!* (Belgrade), Nov. 10, 1947, No. 1,

aims of the war the setting up and strengthening of democratic structures in Europe, the liquidation of Fascism and the prevention of the possibility of a new aggression on the part of Germany and the creation of prolonged co-operation among the peoples of Europe on all sides.

The United States and, in agreement with it, England set for themselves another aim—to get rid of competitors in markets [Germany and Japan] and establish their dominating position. This difference in war aims and task of the post-war organization became deeper in the post-war period.

Two opposite political lines formed:

On the one side is the policy of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and democratic countries directed toward undermining imperialism and strengthening democracy, on the other side is the policy of the United States and England directed toward strengthening imperialism and strangling democracy.

Since the U.S.S.R. and countries of the new democracy became a hindrance in carrying out imperialistic plans for the struggle for world domination and the smashing of democratic movements, there was proclaimed a campaign against the U.S.S.R. and countries of the new democracy, reinforced also by threats of a new war on the part of most zealous imperialistic politicians in the United States and England.

In such way, two camps formed—the imperialistic and anti-democratic camp, which has as a main aim the establishment of world domination of American imperialism and the smashing of democracy, and the anti-imperialistic and democratic camp, which has as a main aim the undermining of imperialism and the strengthening of democracy and the liquidation of the remnants of Fascism.

The struggle of the two opposite camps—of imperialist and anti-imperialist—is going on in a situation of further sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism, of the weakening of the strengthening of the forces of socialism and democracy. This way, the imperialistic camp and its leading force, the United States, is displaying especially aggressive activity.

This activity is developing simultaneously along all lines—in the direction of military measures, of economic expansion and the ideological struggle.

The Truman-Marshall plan is only a constituent part, the European section of the general plan of world expansionist policy carried on by the United States in all parts of the world. The plan of economic and political enslavement of Europe by American imperialism is supple-

mented by plans for the economic and political enslavement of China, Indonesia and South America.

The aggressors of yesterday—the capitalistic magnates of Germany and Japan—are being prepared by the United States for a new role—to become the instrument of the imperialistic policy of the United States in Europe and Asia.

The arsenal of tactical measures utilized by the imperialistic camp has very many forms. Here are combined the direct threat by force, blackmail and extortion, all measures of political economic pressure, or bribery, of utilization of internal contradictions and controversy for the reinforcement of their positions—and all this which is covered by the liberal-Pacific mask designed for deceit and fooling people who are not experienced in politics.

A special place in the tactical arsenal of imperialists is occupied by the utilization of the treacherous policy of Right-wing Socialists of the type of [Léon] Blum [former French Premier and Socialist party leader] in France, [Prime Minister Clement] Attlee and [Foreign Secretary Ernest] Bevin in England, [Dr. Kurt] Schumacher [head of the Social Democratic party] in Germany, [President Karl] Renner [Socialist] and Schaerf [Vice-Chancellor Adolf Schaerf, Socialist] in Austria, [Right-wing Socialist Giuseppe] Saragat in Italy, et cetera, who try to hide the real bandit essence of imperialistic policy under the mask of democracy and Socialist phraseology and who, in reality, in all respects are loyal assistants of imperialists, introducing disintegration into the ranks of the working class and poisoning its conscience.

It is not accidental that the foreign policy of English imperialism has found in the person of Bevin, its most consistent and zealous executor. In these conditions, the anti-imperialistic, democratic camp must rally together and work out a co-ordinated platform of actions to work out its tactics against the main forces of the imperialistic camp, against American imperialism, against its English and French allies, against Right-wing Socialists—first of all those in England and France.

In order to turn into failure the plan of imperialistic aggression, the efforts of all democratic, anti-imperialistic forces in Europe are necessary. Right-wing Socialists are traitors in this cause.

With the exception of those countries of the new democracy where the bloc of Communists and Socialists, with other democratic progressive parties, forms the foundation of resistance of these countries to imperialistic plans, Socialists in the majority of other countries, and first all French Socialists and English Laborites—French Premier Paul

Ramadier, Blum, Attlee and Bevin, by their slavishness and officiousness are facilitating the task of American capital, are provoking it to extortions and are pushing their countries along the road of vassal dependency on the United States.

*Hence, it follows that a special task falls upon Communist parties. They must take into their hands the banner of defense of national independence and sovereignty of their countries.**

If the Communist parties strongly stand on their positions, if they do not permit themselves to be frightened or blackmailed, if they stand bravely on guard for the democracy, national sovereignty, freedom and independence of their countries, if they succeed in their struggle against the attempts of economic and political enslavement of their countries and head all forces which are ready to defend the cause of honor and national independence, then no plans for the enslavement of the countries of Europe and Asia can be realized.

At present this is one of the main tasks of Communist parties.

It is necessary to remember that between the desire of imperialists to develop a new war and the possibility of organizing such a war, there is a great gap.

The peoples of the world do not want war. The forces which stand for peace are so considerable and great that if they are firm and solid in the cause and defense of peace, if they will display firmness and solidarity, then the plans of the aggressors will suffer complete collapse.

It must not be forgotten that the noise of imperialistic agents over the war danger is designed to frighten weak-nerved and unstable ones and obtain, by means of blackmail, concessions to the aggressor.

The main danger to the working class at the present consists in underestimation of its forces and in overestimation of the forces of the imperialistic camp.

As the Munich policy in the past unbound the hands of Hitlerite aggression, so concessions to the new course of the United States and the imperialistic camp may make its inspirers still more insolent and aggressive.

This is why the Communist parties must head the resistance to plans of imperialistic expansion and aggression along all lines—state, political, economic and ideologic—they must rally together, uniting their efforts on the basis of a common, anti-imperialistic and democratic platform and must gather around themselves all democratic forces of the people.

* Italics mine.

Text of the Cominform's Criticism of Communist Leaders of Yugoslavia*

PRAGUE, June 28, 1948.—The text of the Cominform statement on Yugoslavia, as published here in the Communist newspaper "Rude Pravo":

1. The Cominform asserts that the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist party has been lately undertaking an entirely wrong policy on the principal questions of foreign and internal politics, which means a retreat from Marxism-Leninism. In connection with that, the Cominform accepts the proceedings, of the central committee of the All-Union Communist party (Bolshevik), which assumed the initiative in unveiling the wrong policy of the central committee of the Communist party of Yugoslavia and especially the wrong policy of Comrades Tito, Kardelj, Djilas and Rankovic.

2. The Cominform finds that the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist party creates a hateful policy in relation to Soviet Russia and to the All-Union Communist party. In Yugoslavia an undignified policy of underestimating Soviet military specialists was allowed. Also, members of the Soviet Army were discredited. The Soviet private specialists in Yugoslavia were submitted to a special system, under which they were put under guard of the organs of state security and were watched. The same system of guarding and watching was used in the case of the representative of the All-Union Communist party in the Information Bureau, Comrade Judin, and many of the official representatives of Soviet Russia in Yugoslavia.

All these facts prove that the leading persons in the Communist

* The Cominform's strong criticism of the Communist leadership in Yugoslavia came as a distinct surprise and created the first serious rift in the compact Eastern European bloc of the Soviet Union. Reprinted from the *New York Herald Tribune*, June 29, 1948.

party of Yugoslavia took a standpoint unworthy of Communists, on the line of which they began to identify the foreign policy of Soviet Russia with that of the imperialistic powers, and they treat Soviet Russia in the same manner as they treat the bourgeois states. As a result of this anti-Soviet policy in the central committee of the Communist party of Yugoslavia, a slander propaganda borrowed from the arsenals of counter-revolutionary Trotskyism, about the "degeneration" of the All-Union Communist party and about the "degeneration" of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was conducted. The Cominform condemns these anti-Soviet conceptions of leading members of the Yugoslav Communist party as incompatible with Marxism-Leninism and as suitable for nationalists only.

3. In their policy inside the country, the leaders of the Communist party of Yugoslavia are retreating from positions of the working class and parting from the Marxist theory of class struggle. They deny the fact that capitalist elements in their country are growing, and in connection with it the class struggle is sharpening in the Yugoslav villages. This denial comes from an opportunist opinion under which, in the period of growing from capitalism toward socialism, class struggle does not sharpen, as is taught by Marxism-Leninism, but gradually ceases to exist, as is asserted by the opportunists of the Bukharin type who were supporters of the theory of peaceful growing of capitalism into socialism.

Yugoslav leading politicians are carrying out a wrong policy in the villages, ignoring the class differentiations in the villages and considered doctrine about classes and class struggle, in spite of the well known Lenin knowledge that a small individualist economy gives birth to capitalism and bourgeoisie, unceasingly, repeatedly, every day, every hour, elementarily and collectively.

But so far, the political situation in the Yugoslav countryside does not give any reason for self-appeasement and carelessness. In conditions where, as in Yugoslavia, there prevails an individual peasant economy, where there does not exist nationalization of the soil, where there is the law of private property in land and where everybody is allowed to buy and sell land, where in the hands of "kulaks" is concentrated considerable ground, where people are still hired for work and so on, it is not possible to educate a party in the spirit of camouflage of class struggle and appeasement of differences, unless the party gets disarmed against the difficulties in socialistic progress.

The leading members of the Yugoslav Communist party are slipping

off the Marx-Lenin way to the nationalist "kulak" path in the question of the role of the working class, because they believe that peasants are the firmest basis of the Yugoslav state.

Lenin teaches that the proletariat, as the only consequent revolutionary class in the present society, must be the leader, hegemonous in the fight of all people for a full democratic turnover in the struggle of all workers and exploited against suppressors and exploiters.

Yugoslav leading members are violating this knowledge of Marxism-Leninism.

As regards the peasantry, then in a majority, that means the poor and middle-class peasantry can be or even has become a member of the union with the working class, whereas the leading role in this union is kept by the working class.

The stated conception of Yugoslav leaders is violating this theory of Marxism-Leninism. As evident, this conception expresses opinions which suit small bourgeois and nationalists but not Marxists-Leninists.

4. The Cominform is sure that the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist party is revising the Marxist-Leninist theory about the party. According to the theory of Marxism-Leninism, the party is the leading basic power in the country, which has its separate program and does not dissolve in the non-party mass. The party is the highest form of organization and the most important tool of the working class. In Yugoslavia, on the other hand, the Communist party is not considered as the leading force, but the Peoples Front. The Yugoslav leaders undervalue the role of the Communist party and, in fact, they leave the party dissolved in the impartial Peoples Front, which includes quite different classes—workers, working peasants with individual economy, kulaks, traders, small factory owners, bourgeoisie, intellectuals, etc.—as well as various political groups including some bourgeois parties. Yugoslav political leaders are sturdy in denying the wrongness of their conception, that the Communist party of Yugoslavia—they say—cannot and must not have its special program, but that it has to be content with the program of the Peoples Front.

The fact that in Yugoslavia it is only the Peoples Front which is playing its part on the political scene, whereas the party and its organizations do not act openly under its own name before the people, is not only diminishing the role of the party in the political life of the country, but also undermines the party as an independent political force which is entitled to gain a still greater confidence of the people and take under its influence still broader masses of working people by its

open political activity, open propaganda of its opinions and of its program. The leading factors of the Yugoslav Communist party are the faults of the Russian "Mensheviks," which lie in the dissolving of the Marxist party into an impartial mass organization. All these things prove that there are liquidation tendencies with regard to the Communist party in Yugoslavia.

The Information Bureau maintains that such a policy of the central committee of the Communist party of Yugoslavia endangers the very existence of the Communist party and, after all, contains a danger of degeneration of the Yugoslav People's Republic.

5. The Information Bureau maintains that the bureaucratic regime inside the party which was created by leading Yugoslav factors is pernicious for the life and the progress of the Yugoslav Communist party. There is no intra-party democracy in the party—the principle of electibility is not realized, there is no criticism and self-criticism.

The central committee of the Communist party of Yugoslavia, in spite of verbal assurances of Comrades Tito and Kardelj, consists mostly not of elected but of co-opted members. The Communist party is, as a matter of fact, half-legal. The party meetings do not take place, or take place secretly. This fact cannot but undermine the influence of the party in the masses. Such a type of organization of the Yugoslav Communist party cannot be called otherwise than sectarian-bureaucratic type.

It leads to a liquidation of the party as an active decisive organism. It carries out military methods within the party, which are very similar to those which had been introduced by Trotsky.

It must not be suffered, when in the Yugoslav Communist party the rights of the party members are trod upon, when the least criticism of wrong order within the party is followed by cruel reprisals.

The Information Bureau maintains that such a shameful, purely Turkish terroristic regime must not be suffered in a Communist party. The interest of the very existence and progress of the Yugoslav Communist party demands the bringing of such a regime to an end.

6. The Information Bureau maintains that the criticism of the faults made by the central committee of the Communist party of Yugoslavia, which was carried out by the central committee of the All-Union Communist party (Bolshevik) and by the central committees of other Communist parties as a brotherly help to the Yugoslav Communist party, creates for its leadership all necessary conditions to the fastest repair of the committed faults. But the leaders of the Communist party of Yugo-

slavia, affected by exaggerated ambition, megalomania and conceit—instead of honestly accepting this criticism and taking the way of Bolshevik correction of the committed faults—received the criticism with dislike, took a hostile standpoint toward it, took an anti-party way of categorical and general denial of their faults, violated the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism about the relation of a political party to their faults and thereby deepened their anti-party faults.

When the Yugoslav leading factors proved unable to refuse the criticism of the central committee of the All-Union Communist party (Bolshevik) and the central committees of other brotherly parties, they took a way of direct deception of their party and of the people. They kept the criticism of their wrong policy secret from the party, and from the people, and they kept secret also their actual reasons of settling their accounts with Comrades Zujovic and Hebrang.

In recent days—already after the criticism of the faults of the Yugoslav factors which was carried out by the central committees of the All-Union Communist party (Bolshevik) and of the brotherly parties—these former tried to put into effect a great many Left-wing provisions—laws—by means of decrees. The Yugoslav leading factors issued in a great hurry new legal provisions about the nationalization of small industry and retail trade, the fulfillment of which is not at all prepared and which can with regard to such hurry only make the supplying of the Yugoslav population more difficult.

In the same hurry, they issued a new law about a grain tax on the peasants, which is not prepared either, and which therefore cannot but disorganize the supplying of the town population with grain.

Finally, they proclaimed in magnificent declarations their love and devotion to the Soviet Union, although it is sufficiently known that they have been carrying out a hateful policy with regard to the Soviet Union in their practice.

And not even this: the leading factors of the Communist party of Yugoslavia declare with a great self-consciousness a policy of liquidation of capitalist elements in Yugoslavia. In the letter to the central committee of the All-Union Communist party (Bolshevik) on the 13th of April of this year, Tito and Kardelj wrote that “the Politburo” of the central committee will tend to liquidation of the remainder of capitalism in their country.

In accordance with this conception, Kardelj, in his speech in the People's Parliament of the Federated People's Republics of Yugoslavia,

April 25, declared: "In our country, the days of all exploiting of man by man are counted."

Such orientation of leading members of the Communist party of Yugoslavia for liquidation of capitalistic elements under present conditions in Yugoslavia, and therefore for liquidation of "kulaks" as a class, cannot be qualified otherwise than as an adventurous, non-Marxistic act.

This problem is not to be solved when in the country prevails individual economy, which inevitably gives birth to capitalism, when the conditions for mass collectivization of agriculture are not prepared and when a majority of working peasants are not convinced of the advantages of collective way of economy.

The experiences of the all-union Communist party prove that only on a basis of mass collectivization of agriculture, liquidation of the last and most numerous exploiting class—"kulaks"—is possible, and that liquidation of the "kulaks" as a class is an integral part of the collectivization of agriculture.

To make successful a liquidation of the "kulaks" as a class and, therefore, a liquidation of all capitalist elements in the country, it is requested that the party carry out preliminary work which tends to restriction of the capitalistic elements in the country, the fixation of the union of the worker class and the peasantry under the leadership of the worker class and the development of socialistic industry. Haste in this respect can bring only irreparable damage.

Only on the basis of these measures, carefully prepared and carried out, can the transition from restriction of the capitalist elements in the country toward their liquidation be made.

Whatever the attempts of the Yugoslav leaders may be to solve this problem in a hurry and by making decrees in official-offices, they mean either an adventure already doomed to failure or boasting and a vast demagogical declaration.

The Information Bureau maintains that these Left-wing decrees and declarations of the Yugoslav leadership are calculated to mask their refusal to confess their faults and to make honest correction.

7. With regard to the situation created in the Communist party of Yugoslavia, and trying to grant the leading factors of the Yugoslav Communist party a possibility to find a way out of the situation, the central committee of the All-Union Communist party (Bolshevik) has met to discuss the situation in the Yugoslav Communist party at a

meeting of the Information Bureau under the same formal party principles which had been discussed at the first meeting. But to various proposals of brotherly Communist parties to discuss the situation in the Yugoslav Communist party in the Information Bureau Yugoslav leaders answered with a refusal.

Trying to avoid the justified criticism of the brotherly parties in the Information Bureau, Yugoslav leaders made a version about their "having not an equal rights position." It is necessary to say there was not a word true in this version. It generally is known that Communist parties, while organizing the Information Bureau, went on the incontestable principle that every party has to settle the accounts of its activity before the Bureau of Information as well as that every party has right to criticize other parties.

During the first meeting of the nine Communist parties, the Yugoslav Communist party made wide use of this right. The fact that the Yugoslavs refused to settle accounts of their activity before the Information Bureau means an action of the violation of the equal right of Communist parties and is equal to a request to create a privileged position for the Yugoslav Communist party in the Information Bureau.

8. With regard to all that has been stated, the Information Bureau agrees with the evaluation of the situation in the Yugoslav Communist party, with the criticism of the faults of the central committee of the Communist party of Yugoslavia and with the political analysis of these faults as it was explained in letters of the central committee of the All-Union Communist party (Bolshevik) to the central committee of the Communist party of Yugoslavia in March-May, 1948.

The Information Bureau comes to the unanimous conclusion that by its anti-party, anti-Soviet opinions incompatible with Marxism-Leninism, by its attitude in its refusal to take part in the session of the Information Bureau, the leaders of the Communist party of Yugoslavia put themselves against the Communist parties which are members of the Information Bureau; they passed to secession from the united socialistic front against imperialism and took the way of betrayal of the international solidarity of the working masses, and they took the way of transition on positions of nationalism.

The Information Bureau finds that as a result of all this, the central committee of the Communist party of Yugoslavia puts itself and the Yugoslav Communist party outside the family of brotherly Communist parties, outside the united Communist front and, therefore, outside the ranks of the Information Bureau.

Summary: The Information Bureau maintains that the basis of all these faults of the leadership of the Communist party of Yugoslavia is the incontestable fact that in its leadership in the last five to six months openly nationalistic elements prevailed which also were there formerly, masked. It says the leadership of the Communist party of Yugoslavia parted with the international traditions of the Yugoslav Communist party and took the way of nationalism.

Yugoslav leaders, badly orienting themselves in the international situation and frightened by extortionate threats of the imperialists, think that by a series of concessions to imperialistic states, they can gain the favor of these states to make an agreement with them about the independence of Yugoslavia, and gradually to implant to the Yugoslav peoples orientation on these states—that is, orientation on capitalism.

At the same time they silently go out on the well known bourgeois-nationalistic thesis under which the “capitalist states represent a lesser danger for the independence of Yugoslavia than Soviet Russia.”

Leading Yugoslav factors presumably do not understand, or at least pretend not to understand, that a similar nationalistic conception can lead to the degeneration of Yugoslavia into the usual bourgeois republic and to a loss of Yugoslav independence to the imperialistic countries.

The Information Bureau does not doubt that in the very heart of the Communist party of Yugoslavia there are enough sound elements that are truly faithful to Marxism-Leninism, faithful to the international traditions of the Yugoslav Communist party and faithful to the united socialist front.

The aim of these sound elements of the Communist party of Yugoslavia is to force their present leading factors to confess openly and honestly their faults and correct them, to part from nationalism, to return to internationalism and in every way to fix the united socialistic front against imperialism. Or, if the present leaders of the Communist party of Yugoslavia prove unable to do this task, to change them and to raise from below a new internationalist leadership of the Communist party of Yugoslavia.

The Information Bureau does not doubt that the Communist party can fulfill this task.

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